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Chapter 1: The Meeting of Coincidence

[image]

America sighed, slouching in his chair. Chaos reigned across the meeting room, his tired eyes unable to keep up. He taps his finger to a rhythm on the table, trying to distract himself. It was of no use, of course

Every G8 meeting is like that, these days. It's starts out quiet, a nation goes up to present, a comment on said presentation, then all hell breaks loose.

This particular meeting America was glad everyone was fighting. Not only did it mean he got to avoid going up and spouting nonsense (as per his bosses request), it also meant it would be break soon. Germany *despises* getting off topic. '*Honestly*', America thought '*if we aren't careful, Germany's going to pop a blood vessel shouting at us one of these days*.'

As if almost on cue, a resounding shout of, "**SHUT UP YOU IDIOTIC FOOLS! CEASE THIS FIGHTING AT ONCE, AND RETURN TO YOUR SEATS!**"

Germanys face is blood red, normally slicked back hair falling out of place. His teeth ground together, as if it were the one lifeline between him keeping his calm, and him leaping over the podium to strangle the other nations.

A silence descends upon the meeting room, the only sound being the footsteps as they return to where they sat. Frances nose was red, likely from when England punched him. England, in return, sports a slowly blackening eye. France nervously avoids eye contact, while England stews in his anger, his face almost as red as Germany's.

Russias aura lessens, but it still causes China to lean away from him

in nervousness. The old country mumbles curses under his breath, staring daggers at America. '*Likely going on about my debt again*' America grumbles to himself silently. '*Seriously, when will that old bag leave me alone*?'

North Italy and South Italy look entirely unbothered, well, more North Italy at that. South Italy looks borderline murderous, glaring at Germany. America can almost hear his thoughts from here, something along the lines of 'potato' and 'bastard'. North Italy looks to be in a world of his own, a large smile on his face and wandering brown eyes. Again, America can almost hear his thoughts. But this time, only one word is on repeat, 'Pasta~'.

Japan sits on the left of North Italy, seeming quite content to stay quiet and still. America searches the room for his brother, relieved to see he's not being sat on by Russia again. He lingers on the right of France, likely not being noticed by his 'Papa' (again, to Americas disappointment.)

As soon as it seems the room has gathered themselves, Germany goes to speak.

"Now that you utter buffoons have collected yourselves, I call for an hour break as this meetings organiser."
A sigh of relief echoes through the room, and Germany's eyebrow twitches.
"Hopefully you all have calmed down by them." As soon as Germany says that, he walks off the podium, North Italy immediately standing up and following him out of the wooden doors.

Americas slowly drooping eyes watch as the other nations collect their things and walk out the room. One by one, until he's the only one left in the silence. America sighs, before quietly standing up and leaning against the table.

'*How did we end up like this*?' he thought to himself with a sad grin, eyes stormy.
'*Fighting constantly, not even bothering to hear eachother out on the real problems in the world*.' He sighs.
'*Atleast state meetings aren't this bad. Sure, they fight, but they'd rather*

stick to words and leave the physicality at home.'

'*Speaking of the states, didn't they have a meeting scheduled to happen here today too*?' America ponders to himself as he picks his bag up, pushing in his chair in and heading down the hallway. '*Maybe I can stop by and say hello*.'

As he looses himself in his thoughts, America forgets to watch where he walks and ends up running straight into someone.

"Oompf!" America stumbles at the impact, falling to the floor with a thud. "Dude, I am so sorry, I didn't know what I was doing-" He cuts himself off as he turns his gaze to the person above him.

"Amerika?"

'*You've got to be kidding me.'*

Chapter 2: The Start of Something?

[image]

"Amerika?"

'*You've got to be kidding me.*'

America deadpans, as he sits on the floor like a fool. Russia, the tall bastard, has an amused smile on his face as he looks down on him.

America scrambles to his feet, smoothing out his jacket once he regains balance. As he picks his bag from the floor, he turns to properly face Russia, who surprise-surprise, has not left.

"Something you need, dude?"

America sighs, dragging a hand down his face as he stares at Russia. Russia just hums, a small smile ever present on his face. It always managed to freak America out, especially when that smile turned not so friendly.

"Little America should watch where he steps. Russia would not want to squash him like a bug."

Russia said softly, his scarf moving to cover the lower half of his face. This irritates America for some reason, and he almost has the urge to tug it back down and see his full face.

'*The hell's wrong with me?*'

America thought with irritation, fighting to keep surprise off of his face. A silence descends upon them both as they stand in the hallway.

"I um. Have to go now. Don't wanna use up my whole break, y'know? Haha, I'll see you around Russia."

America laughs nervously, breaking the awkward atmosphere. He hurries past Russia, bumping into his shoulder on accident. It was a fleeting, but burning touch. This served to only confuse America further, but a quick check of the watch reminded him he didn't have much time to visit the states left.

Unbeknownst to America, Russia continued to stand in the hallway after he left. The smile had slipped off of his lips, now only a confused frown remained. Russia knew for a fact the break room was the other way. Just where was America headed?

-

America exhales in relief as soon as he notices the meeting room. He had about 10 minutes left, so it would just be a quick stop inside.

He knocks once, pauses, then thrice, the sound echoing throughout the empty hallway. Immediately, the wooden door is opened and he's pulled into a hug by a large number of arms.

"Woah there y'all, I just came to visit! I can't stay for long!"

He grumbles half-heartedly, a genuine smile on his face. As he's released from the hug, he gazes upon his states with fond eyes.

"We know pa, it doesn't mean we cant hug you though!"

Pennsylvania says with a sly smirk gracing her features. Massachusetts chuckles behind her, while Virginia just shakes her head. The others amble around the room, seeming to be on break just like the countries.

"Where's the others? Or is this just a Council of the Thirteen meeting?"

America asks with confusion, gazing upon the room and counting only thirteen, fourteen if you include him.

"Just us, thank the lord. I am not ready to deal with Florida again."

New York speaks up from the table in the middle of the room where

he plays cards with Connecticut and New Hampshire. Connecticut curses under his breath, eyes locked onto his cards while New Hampshire looks to be on the verge of tears.

Ignoring that spectacle that's likely to blow up, America turns to Virginia.

"I don't see Delaware around. She hasn't been kidnapped by a nation now has she?"

America jokes, a slight hint of worry still evident in his voice. Virginia just shakes her head, pointing towards the ladies bathroom.

"She's alright. The joys of womanhood, you know?"

Virginia chuckles, and a resounding;

"Aye aye!"

echoes from the females present in the room.

"Ah, I see."

America glances at the clock, and with a start, realises he's already five minutes late. Hurriedly, he hugs those within reach then turns towards the door with a last wave to those milling behind him.

"I have to hurry, or Germany's gonna get on my case. I'll see you kids at the next meeting!"

America hurries out of the room, laughing at the shout of "we're not kids!" echoing out from behind him. His footsteps thud against the floor as he rushes to the meeting room, not realising the country that was just behind the door he opened.

-

Russia stared open mouthed as the American ran out, violet eyes wide in surprise.

'*Who were these people? What meeting was that?*'

Russias face hardens, all traces of shock gone. He pulls his scarf to his mouth, hiding his darkening frown. His fists clench.

'*Little American thinks he can hide things from me?*'

Russia turns swiftly, aiming to follow America. His main thought is to interrogate him after the meeting, yet a small part in the back of his head is concerned.

'*Just what secret are you keeping, Amerika?*'

Chapter 3: The Interrogation

[image]

'*Just what secret are you keeping, Amerika?'*

-

"THE HERO HAS ARRIVED!"

America shouts as he shoved the doors open, startling the countries inside. England even drops his tea, giving America a scathing glare. America sends an apologetic glance back.

As he strides to his chair, he briefly notices the fact Russia is missing. He shrugs it off, yet it lingers in his thoughts.

'*Where's the commie?'*

"You're late."

Germany states with an irritated twitch of his brow. North Italy pats his arm, calming him slightly. America sighs, strutting up to his chair and plopping down with a small thud.

"Hey, what're you getting all worked up at me for! Russia isn't even here either!"

America complains loudly, crossing his arms as he slumps in his seat. Germany sits up straighter and glances towards the russians chair. He, is indeed, not there.

China seems to be more at ease, playing with a panda plushie discreetly while Japan quietly converses with North Italy beside Germany, a small, content smile on his face.

France seems to be off annoying England again, although he seems to be a bit wary of his nose and does it from a safe few feet. If England wasn't busy cleaning up the tea Americas entrance made him spill, Americas sure he would've started strangling him long

time ago.

"It seems we'll have to start without him."

Germany relents, already looking like he regrets his existence.

"No need."

He stiffens, and all those present swivel to the door. There, slightly out of breath, was Russia. He strides into the room like a man on a mission, and sits down with a closed mouth smile.

'*Wonder where he's been?'*

America ponders, staring absentmindedly at Russia. To his surprise, Russia stares right back at him, a bit too intently for America. He shifts in his seat, breaking eye contact and trying to avoid Russias stare.

Germany sighs, he feels like he does that a lot lately.

"Let's start this meeting, for the second time now."

-

The meeting seemed to drag on forever, and Americas eyes were once again drooping by the end of it. To top it all off, Russia had not stopped staring at him. Not. Even. Once. He's pretty sure the guy is unable to blink or something.

As America began to exit the empty meeting room, he was suddenly ripped from the doorway and shoved against the wall. Strong, cold hands gripped his above his head and stormy violet eyes gazed deeply into his.

America breathes out in shock, the attack was so quick he hadn't had time to react. Quickly regaining his wits, he practically yells in Russia's face,

"What the hell, man? What's your problem?!"

The fact he's so agitated confused Russia, until he notices Americas

furrowed brows and steadily growing blush. A pink tint appears on Russias face as he releases Americas hand, backing up a few steps.

America rubs his wrists, staring at Russia with a slight glare. Russia tugs the scarf up to his face, hiding his expression.

"There is something I need to talk to you about, Amerika."

America scoffs, putting his hands on his hips.

"What could possibly be so important that you need to drag me back into the meeting room without anyone in it? Is this why you were staring at me the whole time?"

Russia blanks at his rapid fire questions, but eventually his face takes on a slightly guilty, but unremorseful expression.

"Da."

America startles at the blunt response, but sighs. It's Russia, he should be used to that.

"Well what is it, Russia? I still have places to be, y'know? Burgers to eat, people to save-"

His sarcastic remark is cut off

"Who were those people in the meeting you visited during our break?"

Americas heart stops.

-

Hey there! Author here, just wanted to let y'all know if you didn't read the description, this story is my very first and likely not the best compared to some out there. Its not beta'd either. Still, I'd like to thank those who took the time out of their days, wherever you may be in the world. Goeie môre, Goeie middag, Goeie aand of Goeie nag to all those out there!

-JackalsTrou

Chapter 4:The Very Reluctant Truth

[image]

"Who were those people in the meeting you visited during our break?"

Americas heart stops.

-
(TW:badly written panic attack somewhere down the middle)

'*What in the name of Christ. How in the hell. Did he.. did he follow me?'*

As America stood and stared, hands shaking, his thoughts were running wild. Back and forth, again and again, trying to make sense of what Russia had just said to him.

His mouth was wide open, and openly shocked look on his face. This, perhaps, confirmed Russias (fears) ideas that this was something serious.

"The girl, she called you 'Pa'. You referred to them as your children."

Russia does not ask. He states, with conviction. His eyes have narrowed, slowly inching towards America step by step.

America steps back until, once again, his back has hit the wall. He curses silently, but thankfully he isn't restrained this time.

Russia seems to get more irritated as the minutes pass, and America hasn't answered him. Noticing this, America hastily replies with waving hands,

"I-its just a little joke between us? Y'know, colleagues in the same work place!"

His tone seems to get more frantic the longer Russia stares at him,

frown deepening.

"Cease your pathetic attempts at covering yourself, Amerika. I know for a fact you called them by the names of states."

'*shit.*'

At this point, America can't deny it. He's panicking. Badly. His breaths come out in short gasp, eyes watering slightly. He tries to concentrate on Russias words, but finds his mind elsewhere. He slides down the wall, burying his head in his arms as he barely holds back tears.

'*shitshitshitshITSSHITSHIT. What am I supposed to do? One of my biggest enemies knows. Whats he gonna do when he finds the rest of them? Alaska? Oh nonono no NO!*'

As Americas thoughts continue to spiral, Russia can only stand there in shock as he shakes and sobs. His violet eyes are wide, previous irritation gone. Seeing America break down like this has unsettled him greatly, and he's at a loss at what to do.

Slowly, he lowers himself to the ground, and sits himself in front of America. He wraps an arm around him, seeing him flinch slightly. For some reason, Russia's heart clenches when he notices.

"Amerika?"

Russias voice is unbelievably soft, whether it's due to the shock of the situation or something else America can't tell.

"Amerika, look at me."

The slightly firmer tone of voice has America glancing up, eyes red and mind running wild. Fear is evident in his gaze, and perhaps, for the first time, it's the one thing Russia didn't want to see.

Thinking back on everything that's lead up to this, Russia compromises with himself. Part of the reason he was so obsessed with figuring out Americas secret, was because he wanted someone else to be seen in a bad light for once. Call him selfish, but he just didn't want to be lonely anymore. He's seen the looks the other

countries throw him when they think he's not looking, even his sisters.

After some few minutes, Russia lost count after 20, Americas sobs lessen and quiet. Russia sighs. He has a plan, one that'll hopefully solve both of their problems.

"Amerika, what if we make a deal?"

Despite the soft delivery, America can't help but stiffen in Russias hold. He hastily wipes his eyes, shuffling out of his grip.

"What type of deal."

America says with a steely tone, slightly undermined by his pathetic state and raspy voice.

"I will not tell anyone about your states. Even my government."

This just about leaves America gobsmacked. Russia, not jumping on his enemies biggest secret? Has it started storming?

'I sense a but in this conversation.'

*"*But."

America braces himself, readying his nerves and blanking his facial expression.

"On the condition you be my friend."

'...'

'huh??'

-

Hey you guys! Sorry for the slightly shorter chapter, I pulled an all-nighter yesterday for my art project (don't be an artist if you value your sleep schedule) and am currently dead tired. Knew I had to get this one out though, it was sitting in my brain the whoooooole day. I'm switching over to posting every second day, as that seems to

give me more time to think about where I want this story to go! Well, I think I've wasted your time enough. Goeie môre, Goeie middag, Goeie aand of Goeie nag!

Chapter 5: The Promise of Beginning

[image]

"On the condition you be my friend."

'...'

'*huh*??'

-

America stares. Blinks. Rubs his eyes. Then starts laughing maniacally. Slightly off put by his quick change in behaviour, all Russia can do is sit with an unimpressed look on his face.

"You- you- HAHAHAHAHAH-"

America gasps out, a wide smirk on his face. His eyes, though, tell a different story.

"You really expect me to believe that?"

America gritts his teeth, chest heaving.
Russia looks irritated, yet he can't help the slight hurt that flashes across his face at Americas words. Seeing this, America sighs as he puts his face in his hands.

"Listen, Russia. I don't mean to sound rude. I'm all for you keeping my secret and such. It's just.."

He sighs again, deeper and more bone-tired.

"We've been at eachothers throats for how many years now? And you just suddenly expect me to be fine with being your friend?"

Russia seems to sink into himself slightly, avoiding Americas eye contact. In a harsh tone, he growls,

"It wasn't like we weren't friends before.."

America stiffens.

"There's a reason it's called **before** Russia."

Russia grows more frustrated, his desperation growing,

"Da, but can we not try again? For the sake of the Secret?"

As he says that, he grabs onto America shoulders and looks him in the eyes. It's the longest they've had physical contact that doesn't involve throwing punches, and America can't help but marvel at the fact.

America sighs. He seems to be doing that a lot lately. He takes Russia's words into account, his desperation for the states to be kept a secret, and the small part in the back of his mind that wants to be friends again.

'*What has my life come to? Not only was my biggest secret nearly exposed, now Russia wants to be friends again! Although.. would it really be so bad?'*

America contemplates this, rolling the idea around in his head. Finally, he makes his decision. He stands up quickly, shrugging off Russias hands.

He looks down to Russia on the floor and, while offering his hand to him, says,

"I accept the condition of your deal. But, it's going to take a lot of work between the two of us to get where we were before. I trust you'll be able to handle it?"

Russia smirks in tandem with America, grabbing the offered hand and pulling himself up. He steps back from America, dusting off his coat and tugging up his scarf.

"Da. I've always liked a good challenge. I'm sure you agree?"

America barks out a laugh, startled. Russia snickers with him, violet

eyes locked on his sky blue ones.

As he calms down, he turns his head back to Russia with a small frown.

"I'm serious, though. I'm trusting you to keep your promise, and in turn my states stay safe."

Then, his face pinkens softly, and he mumbles,

"I'll keep my part of the promise too, I guess.."

Russia chuckles at that last part, before his voice takes on a serious tone.

"Rest assured, Amerika, I'll keep my promise."

Then, without much thought, Russia offers his pinkie. America lifts an eyebrow, a bit surprised but at the same time, it's Russia.

"Infact, I pinkie promise!"

America deadpans, bemused, but takes his pinkie anyways. As they shake on it, America can't help but wait for what their new friendship will bring.

'Or, if this friendship will even survive. Last time didn't turn out so well. How can we make sure this one does?'

As if Russia can hear his thoughts, he releases his pinkie, drawing him out of his thoughts.

"We're older now, da? We'll learn from our mistakes."

Despite Russias assurances, America can't help but worry still.

'You say we're older, but how can we be when everyday we fought at eachothers throats for how many meetings?'

'...'

America breathes out slowly.

"Alright. Yeah, I guess you're right."

'Then why do I still worry?'

-

Heyoo! Author here, I'll be leaving small messages like these every chapter now. Yoh, I didn't expect writing to be so hard lol. Anyways, im tired, it's 10 minutes to twelve, I hope you've enjoyed. Goeie môre, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 6:The Recoup

[image]

"Alright. Yeah, I guess you're right."

'*Then why do I still worry?*'

-

America sighed in relief as soon as he closed the door to his apartment. Today has been quite the mess, emotionally and mentally.

After the fiasco in the empty meeting room, he and Russia had exchanged numbers and timid goodbyes. It was the fragile start of a new friendship, built on the promise to keep a secret.

He glances down at his phone screen as he hung his jacket over the chair, plopping down on a coach to relax. He winces as he sees over a hundred messages, likely from the states.

America massages his temple, thinking about all the trouble they caused in their respective meetings and states.

While stretching out on the couch, he gazes about the pictures on the walls.
Each state got their artwork, self portrait, or just anything they made in general framed. Most are yellowed from age, browning around the edges. He makes sure to check up on them often, as it's memories he's sure he'll forever maintain.

He pauses as his stomach grumbles, half-heartedly patting it then standing up and heading to the kitchen. More art lines the hallway, a collage of art styles from where every state chipped in to paint.

America sighs in remembrance, a wide smile splits his face. Humming a tune, he cooks himself a quick dinner, wanting to be fed before facing the fire.

-

America huffs out a tired breath, glad to be over and done.

'*That took faaar too long. Seriously, how do they manage to set almost 3 buildings on fire and send another into lockdown within 4 hours?'*

America shakes his head in bemusement, taking a glance again the clock. He startles, seeing it's almost twenty to ten.

'No wonder my eyes feel as if they're gonna fall out of my head!'

Standing up slowly, he sluggishly walks to his bedroom, the soft tap of his sock covered feet echoing in the silence. He doesn't bother to turn on the light, knowing his house inside out already.

America sits on his bed, exhaling in relief once his back hits the spongey mattress. Covering himself in the duvet (blanket), he removes his glasses and sets them on the nightstand.

As his head makes contact with the pillow, his eyes fluttering closed until blackness overcomes him.

-

Slowly, he awakes to a field. The strange thing about it, is that it's filled with sunflowers.

America glances around in confusion. This feels.. off, some how. What is he doing here? Why does his vision seem out of focus at points?

"Amerika?"

He hears a voice call out to him. He turns to face the person, stiffening in slight shock when he recognizes Russia.

He stands with a sunflower in his hand, one of the brightest smile he's ever seen on his face. His scarf blows gently in the wind, fluttering and stuttering behind him.
His violet eyes glow in the sunlight, his silvery hair glistens.

"Look at all these sunflowers! How beautiful, Da?"

Russia holds out the sunflower in his hands, offering it to America.

"Take the sunflower?"
*' **Accept my apology?'***

He reaches out slowly, his fingers just grasping the edges of it.

Russia blinks, then softly smiles.

"Thank you"

And with that, he wakes.

-

The morning sun peeks through his window, shining directly onto Americas face.

He groans in annoyance, as he was hoping for just a bit more sleep.

'Seriously, I don't wanna keep waking up at the ass crack of dawn. I should really remember to close those stupid curtains at night.'

He stumbles out of bed, groggily dressing himself and neatening his hair. He slumps over the island in the kitchen as he lazily sips his tea.

'Tea may be better as fish food, but you have to admit, some of its pretty good.'

Reading his texts on his phone further, he almost spits his tea out in shock. There, plain as day, was a text from an unknown number. They stated their name, and America was unsurprised to see it was Russia.

'Hes already texting me?

He debates with himself whether to answer on the get-go or not, but ultimately decides to go with it. Better to actually try and be friends with Russia again than actively avoid the guy.

'Whelp, here goes nothing.'

-

heyoo, author here! I know some wording might be confusing, so let me explain it. A duvet is the blanket on top of your bed, it's the brand name for it basically. We just like using fancy words lol. Also, an island is just basically a table in the vicinity of the kitchen. Search it up, you'll find a picture explaing better than I can. Anyways, I write these chapters at half past ten if I'm lucky, so my eyes are burning rn. Hope you enjoyed this slightly longer chapter, and I'll see you in two days. Goeie môre, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 7: The Text

[image]

'Whelp, here goes nothing..'

-

America glances down at his phone, clenched tightly in his hand. He groans, regretting his existence but starts texting anyways.

Russia:

Amerika?

Hey Russia!

This is the correct phone number then.

Yep!

You are as energetic over text as you are in real life, it seems.

America pauses in his typing, then shrugs.

'He isn't wrong?'

Russia:

I'm gonna take that as a compliment?

You do what you want, Amerika.

Okayyyy?
Anyways, what did you text me
for dude? Just wanted to chat
to my awesome self?

Some things can only be said over text.

At this response, America grows slightly concerned.

Russia:

Like what? Is everything okay?

I..
I want to know more about your states.

America freezes. Then, a small smile appears on his face.

Russia:

You really do?

Yes.
I'd just, like to understand a bit more.
If you'd allow me to do so.

Oh gosh where do I start?

From the beginning?

We'll be here for quite a while,
Russia.
You sure you can talk that long?

Da.

Hah, here goes nothing then!
Okay, so it stared first with-

Then, America and Russia proceed to talk for more than three hours, America describing how he saw his kids grow up, their battles, their cultures and so much more. Russias respect for America only grew the more he heard about them.

Frankly, children scared him. He didn't even know the first thing about kids, and to hear America raise over 50? What image he had created of him these past few centuries was instantly shattered, remoulded into something better. Kinder, even.

It was nearing the afternoon when the conversation calmed. But before they could each leave for their respective paperwork, there

was one last conversation that needed to be had.

Russia:

Amerika?

Yes, Russia?

What of Alaska?

America breathed out deeply. He had been waiting for this to be brought up.

Russia:

He's.. doing alright.
He gets along with the
other states pretty well.

Does he hate me?

No no no no! No way!
If anything, he holds a slight
dislike for you. You did sell him for
basically nothing to me after all.
Frankly, I think he'd thank you for it.

Thank me?

Whoo boy okay, uh, this is gonna
sound pretentious, but, he'd
thank you for letting him live a
better life with me than you could
ever give him.

...

That.. makes sense, actually.

Wait, you aren't pissed about it?

Maybe in the past I would've been, but hearing how you've talked

about your states and how much love you carry for them?

No, I don't think I could be mad.

That is actually such a relief omg
you have no idea.

I can almost sense it through the phone :)

America gasps out in glee, fingers flying across the keypad.

Russia:

You can use emoticons??
(••)

Hah, yes little Amerika, I can.
:-D

While texting back and forth, spamming the chat with emotions, America pauses in his typing before realising the time.

Russia:

Shit dude I gotta go, talk to
you later Russia!

Call me Ivan.

America sucks in a surprised breath. Nations almost never give out their personal names, to do it is seem as a massive act of trust.

America hesitates. His fingers hover above the correct letters, as if stopped by a force field.

He shakes his head, gathering all his courage, and,

Russia:

In that case, call me Alfred.

He switches his phone off (like a coward) and puts his head in his hands.

'I can't believe I just did that'

He ignores the multiple 'dings' of notifications coming from his phone, standing up and heading to his office. Being a nation means a never ending supply of paperwork, which, in turn, a never ending supply of migraines.

Alfred sighs.

'Maybe this will distract me from my impending doom.'

Spoiler alert, it didn't.

-

Heyoo, author here. I've got an exam tomorrow, and then a netball match on Saturday, so I'll likely only update on Sunday. Thankfully, I've got the week after that free before exams are in full swing, so I'll keep to my schedule then. Don't worry, I'll warn in advance if I take too long to upload a chapter. Thanks for reading, Goeie môre, dag, aand, middag of nag.

Chapter 8: The Quaint Café

[image]

'*Maybe this will distract me from my impending doom.'*

Spoiler alert, it didn't.

-

Alfred groans, his head slamming into the table. He'd been sitting in the workroom for what seems like days, despite it being only a few hours. He glances at the clock, the ticking sound mocking his existence with how slowly the hand moves.

As he rubs his aching temple, he looses himself in his thoughts. Mainly, regarding that of a certain russian.
Alfred, despite the long hours of paperwork, could not get his mind off of him. Especially regarding the fact he told Alfred his name.

Not even in the time before, when the cold war was but a whisper in the air and their alliance held strong. When their friendship was lasting, no thoughts of betrayal even dreamt of.

Alfred shakes his head.

'Best not to go too far back.'

He sighs, the rustling of paper disturbing his remembrance. He glances down to the loosely held pen in his hand, grimacing at his continuously worsening handwriting. Alfred looks mournfully at the stack of paperwork left, almost going past his head.

'This is getting me nowhere. Seriously, all this thinking of Ru-.. Ivan.. has clouded my mind.'

Frustrated, he picks up the nearest piece of likely important government work and angrily crumples it, throwing it towards the door. It falls pathetically to the floor.

'So what if he revealed his name to me? He probably does that for every country he's tried to be friends with!'

He makes sure to push down the small thought in the back of his head that says,'*But even his sisters call him by his country name, so what does that mean for me?'*

'So what if his stupid little smile always gets my attention, it's likely a ploy to get me to like him better!'

But when fighting with himself and this thought comes across his mind, he stops. Guiltily, he admits,

'No, that's not it. Ivan, he..'

He sighs.

'He's actually making the effort to get to know me, my states.'

And despite their decades long differences, Alfred can't help but commend him for that. Even after all the time that's passed between them, all the fights, he still seeks a way to mend their friendship.

Alfred, deep down, knows he's missed him. He was, despite not wanting to admit it, lonely, without Ivan.

'He was my closest friend for years, it's no surprise I missed him..'

He grumbles to himself,

'*Not like I have many friends either.'*

And it was true. Despite popular belief, America considers everyone his friend. But Alfred, only a select few. His brother, Canada, being one of them.

Alfred rapidly pales as he thinks of Matthew.

' Ooohhhh shit. What's Mattie gonna do when he finds out? He was there when our friendship broke, and that look promised murder..'

He grimaces, his brothers not-so-innocent face flashing across his

mind.

'Yep, best to keep it on the downlow before Mr war-crime committer finds him.'

Alfred stands from his chair, stretching his arms above his head and cracking his back with a relieved sigh. He walks towards the door, making multiple plans to prevent Ivan's inevitable run in with Matthew. If he isn't there when he does, well.. Alfred can only pray for him at that point.

A quiet ding of notification came from his phone, and he opens it to see who it was.

A simple message from Ivan, always one to be punctual, says,

Ivan:

Coffee near your place?

Quickly tapping a reply, he sends him a location of a quaint café near his house with a huff of amusement. Quickly, he rushes to get dressed into something neater and worthy of being seen in.

He doesn't even realise, in all his excitement, that he'd been smiling the whole way through.

-

Ivan's pov:

Ivan glances at his outfit in the mirror, nitpicking any detail he finds unsatisfactory.

He grumbles to himself, tugging his scarf over his mouth again to hide the slight tint of pink. Who knew the great and scary Russia would be worried about something as simple as his outfit?

Glancing at the clock on the hotel room wall, he dusts himself off before leaving the building. On his way to the Café, he can't help but worry.

'What if I mess things up? I've been lonely for so long, I don't think I can bear it for another few decades..

His thoughts are cut off as he arrives at the coffee shop, pushing open the door and hearing the small bell jingle. He looks around, not yet spotting Amer-.. Alfred. Not yet spotting Alfred, he finds himself a seat in the comfy café, tension melting out of his shoulders with the calm atmosphere.

It was small, able to fit only a few tables and chairs, the miniature kitchen and food display taking up about a third of the available space.

As Ivan continues to observe the quaint café, he almost misses the bell ringing, announcing the arrival of a new person. He perks up, turning towards the door. His breath catches in his throat. Standing in the doorway, shaking off his umbrella (when had it started raining?) was Alfred.

The drops of water made his hair shine like gold in the cafés lighting, his storm blue eyes gazing around the room until they landed on Ivan.

Alfred seemed to light up, and Ivan's fears disappeared. As Alfred rushed over to his table, a massive smile on his face, all Ivan could think was,

'I can't wait to get to know you again, Sunflower.'

-

Heyooo! As an apology for the longer absence, you get a longer chapter! Yoh, writers block really hits hard when you want to write long. Anyways, a special thanks to one of my best friends, Darina, who's been not only supporting my writing, but also sorta beta-ing it? She's one of the main reason I continue writing, with how excitedly she waits for another chapter lol. Aaanywho, Goeie môre, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 9: The Conversation(s)

[image]

'I can't wait to get to know you again, Sunflower.'

-

As this thought crosses Ivan's mind, he's surprised at how fast he openly agreed with it.

He can't help it. He stares as Alfred seats himself, his gaze never leaving those lovely storm-blue eyes. The ahoge that seems to have a mind of it's own, twitching and bouncing all over the place. The way his wheat blonde hair shines almost gold in the café's lighting, framing his soft face.

And that smile.

Oh, that smile.

Ivan doesn't know how he's never noticed it before. How different it was to the one million watt smiles he gives at the meetings. This, was softer. Not as forced.

'*Just as beautiful as the rest of him-'*

His unruly thoughts are cut off as Alfred waves a hand infront of his face, concern evident in his eyes.

"Heyoo! Earth to.. Ivan? Everything alright?"

Ivan notices the slight hesitation on his human name. Despite this, he can't help but brighten when he hears it from Alfred.

'When did that start happening?'

"I am fine, Alfred. Thank you for your concern."

He smiles back, Alfred bouncing up and down as he retracts his

hand with a pout.

"Good! I wouldn't have wanted to come all this way only to find you're sick or something, you know?"

He jokes, scratching the back of his head. Ivan rolls his eyes, but finds himself not as upset as he would've been.

They've always been like that, Alfred and Ivan. Easy to forgive, quick to click. It's almost like nothing happened. But something's changed, a certain stress in the air. Whether this is for the better, none of them can tell. For now, all they can do is try.

"So, tell me dude."

Ivan startles, not realising he got lost in his thoughts again. Leaning back against the cushioned chair, he raises an eyebrow as he waits for Alfreds question.

"What're you gonna eat?"

Alfred asks with a toothy grin. Ivan hums, looking down at the menu and what's available. Honestly, he had expected Alfred to ask something more serious, but he expects he'll do that once they've finished eating.

"I think I'll take the chocolate macarons."

Alfred search's the menu, before shrugging and throwing his hands up in exasperation.

"Yknow what? Same."

Ivan chuckles, watching as Alfred gets up to order their snacks before coming to sit back down.

If Ivan was admiring him from behind?
That's between you and me.

-

Alfred's pov:

Alfred honestly didn't know how it came to this.

Just barely a week ago, he and Ivan were at eachothers throats, spitting insults and trading punches.

And now?

Sitting at a café together, munching on chocolate macarons and actually enjoying the company.

He can't say he minds, really. In fact, this is probably the happiest he's been in a while.

As he continues to chuckle from a story Ivan told him from his childhood, a thought crosses his mind and he grimaces. Ivan instantly takes notice, and with a worried expression asks,

"Everything alright, Alfred?"

He just barely stops the shiver coming from hearing his human name, but sighs as he seems to physically droop.

"I've been thinking..'

"A first for you, I'd say."

Ivan chuckles worriedly, breaking the tense atmosphere hurriedly. Alfred cracks a small smile, but continues with a serious tone,

"In order for us to keep the peace, I say we separate our nations from our lives."

Silence.

Slowly, Ivan puts down the macaron he took a bite out of and folds his hands on the table.

"What, excatly, do you mean by that Alfred?"

He hesitantly asks, a wary look in his eyes.

"The whole time we've been talking, it's just been us. Alfred and Ivan, correct?"

Alfred watches Ivan with intent, then,

"Da?"

"But as soon as country names or politics and the past are brought up, we instantly become guarded and tense again?"

Alfred watches as the idea sinks in, a look of understanding passing over.

"I may not like Russia, but I sure am starting to like Ivan."

Ivan's face does something strange. A pink tint appears across his nose, spreading towards his ears. His shoulders start to shake. As Alfred sits there confused and slightly worried, Ivan suddenly bursts into laughter.

"HAHAH- you, Alfred, you-"

He watches as Ivan wipes tears of mirth from his eyes, staring at Alfred like he's hung the stars for him.

"That might be, the most idiotic, but best idea you've ever come up with."

Alfred beams, his whole being seeming to light up. He pumps his fist in the air, a small '*yes!*' whispered under his breath.

As Ivan fights off the last of his chuckles, Alfred suddenly remembers something. Or rather, someone.

"Oh yeah, and I'd hate to alarm you, but it'd be best if you stay away from my brother for the remainder of the meetings."

As Ivan controls himself, he looks up confused, silvery hair falling infront of his eyes.

"Why?"

Alfred clears his throat, and mumbles out,

"He might just commit another war crime when he finds out we've

made up.."

Ivan freezes.

"What do you mean another war crime??"

"Alfred?"

"Alfred answer me please don't just leave me on that-"

-

Heyooo! Damn, nearly missed that update, my bad y'all. Also, guess what ya girl managed to do at netball practice yesterday? Sprain her ankle, that's what. So I'm now off sport the rest of the week, and that'll hopefully give me more time to figure out this story line. Oo, almost forgot, TYSM FOR 300+ READS!! Honestly, never thought I'd get this far, you guys are the best. Anyways, hope you enjoyed. Goeie môre, middag, aand of nag!

Memory. 1

[image]

"How could they?"

America wept. And wept. And wept. Until he couldn't anymore. Russia sat at his side, still and unmoving. A constant, helping to ground him.

America cried until his tears stopped and his eyes dried. All that was left was his voice, choking and sobbing pitifully as he clutched his jacket.

The date was 1861. And the American civil war had just begun.

-

America stood as the states assembled, trying to ignore the few empty spots. The room was eerily silent, his children unable to look eachother in the eye.

The air was tense. As if everyone was waiting for the ball to drop. For the next state to join the Confederacy.

America had been expecting this to happen, to his dismay. He'd been feeling the split, his people had been unhappy.

Judging by the looks on his states faces, they could feel it too.

-

"Amerika?"

A knock on the office door had America starting out of his trance, glancing up to the wooden door. He sighs, glancing to the window on his right. The moon was high in the sky, letting him just see his reflection in the candlelight.

Dark bags under his eyes, disheveled hair and a deep frown mar his face. His once storm blue eyes seem grey, dull and devoid of any colour. He sighs.

"Come in, Russian empire."

The door opens with a loud creak, America wincing at the harsh assault on his eardrums. He faces the paperwork on his desk as he hears heavy footsteps approaching his desk.

"*What are you doing awake, little Amerika*?"

The smooth, accented voice of the russian empire says. America removes his gaze from the documents, looking up to him. Concern glows brightly in his eyes, hidden behind a blank look. His signature scarf looks out of place on his military uniform.

"I need to get this done, my soldiers-"

"Can wait another day."

Russian empire cuts him off, and he sighs in exasperation. He's weary, he can see that now. He's offered a hand, and America shifts slightly. He hesitantly takes it, being pulled up to stand next to him.

"The battle is nearing. You need rest."

America nearly growls in frustration as he paces around the room with quick strides.
He feels like it hasn't even been a few days since he's gained independence, yet he's involved in another battle yet again.

But this time.

Oh, this time.

It's so much worse.

This time?

It's against his children.

-

Tears prickle at the edge of his eyes, America hurriedly rubbing it away on the edge of his sleeve.

He'd seen one of his states on the battlefield today. Gun in hand, he'd shouted orders to his fellow soldiers during the chaos.

And then, amidst the gun fire, a strikingly familiar blue gaze. But instead of the mutual love he was used to, a gaze of hatred stared back at him. Standing in the battlefield, cap shadowing his eyes, was Virginia.

"Son?"

He mouthed, stretching a hand out towards him. Nevada held the blank look on his face, no emotion seen. He raises the gun.

A shot.

...

His eyes widened in shock. He looks down, placing a hand on his chest. It comes back blood stained.

...

The First Battle of Bull Run was successfully won by the Confederacy.

-

America remembers each day his states appeared. They were some of the happiest of his life, for some in a not so happy time.

He raised them from toddlers to the people they are today.

America is happy.

Alfred can't help but mourn just how fast they grew.

-

America sits on the edge of his bed, Maine wrapping gauze onto his injured arm. She tightens it, causing a wince to escape from him.

She just tuts.

"Honestly Father, if you weren't so reckless on the battlefield, this wouldn't be so bad."

America opens his mouth to give a sarcastic reply, only to get cut off again by a stern voice,

"I will hit you with this roll if you do not keep still!"

Maine admonished, now cleaning the blood off of his back with a wet cloth. Silence overtakes them, the afternoon sun shining through the window.

"We'll get them back."

Maine freezes. Her hands have a minute shake to them as she continues applying cream to the wounds. America turns around, grabbing her hands in his. He stares her in the eye, saying,

*"We **will** make sure they return home"*

She tears up, and they embrace, arms circling one another as father and daughter.

'We have to.'

-

Heyooo. Goddamn, was that a difficult chapter to write. Um so, any Americans reading this? All the info I get is off Google, so please feel free to correct me. I literally have no idea what I'm writing about for battles and stuff lol. Sorry to suddenly hit y'all with the angst, I was feeling a bietjie devious, yknow? Anyways, Goeie morê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 10: The Continuation

[image]

"What do you mean another war crime??"

"Alfred?"

"Alfred answer me please don't just leave me on that-"

-

After that disaster of a chat, which led to Alfred out of breath, cackling and Ivan two shades paler looking like he swallowed a lemon, things eventually calmed down.

They talked long into the afternoon, laughter and conversation flowing easily throughout the hours. Sadly, all good things have to come to and end, and they made their way to the exit.

"It's still raining?"

Alfred ponders out loud, watching the droplets fall from the sky.

"It seems to have been going on for quite a while."

Ivan agrees, looking up with him. A cold breeze flows by as they step out of the door and under the canopy. Alfred shivers, gripping his blue umbrella hard. As he turns to Ivan to ask a question, he suddenly notices something.

"Ivan, wheres your umbrella?"

Ivan freezes, then looks back down to Alfred.

"It wasn't exactly raining when I first came here, Alfred. I didn't think I'd need one."

Alfred hums, watching him contently. Feeling slightly awkward, Ivan averts his gaze, hand going to tug his scarf up to cover the

lower half of his face.

"No, don't do that!"

Alfred admonished, swatting his hand away insistently. This, unsurprisingly, startles the absolute shit out of Ivan, who just stares down in shock. Alfred also seemed a bit unnerved at his reaction, quickly whipping his hand away.

"Sorry, it's just.. I barely see your face in a good light enough as it is. With the scarf covering it, kinda brings down the whole point, y'know?"

Alfred awkwardly explains his half-assed answer, scratching the back of his head while leaning on his umbrella.

The silence stretches on, and Alfred starts to get nervous.

'*Shit, I probably freaked him out.*'

Just as Alfred looks to him to apologise, he stops.

Ivan's face is blood red, and if he concentrated, Alfred swears he could see steam coming out of his ears.

"Woah woah woah, are you okay?? I'm so sorry, was that too much?"

Alfred frets, stepping closer to Ivan with worry evident on his face. He snaps out of whatever daze Alfred's word held him in, before stuttering a response,

"N-no, it's f-fine! Just, the wind is chilly with all the rain."

Ivan inwardly winces with his terrible excuse. Alfred looks skeptical, but seems to buy it (if only for Ivans sake).

"Hey, since you forgot your umbrella, why don't you come to my place?"

Alfred suggests out of the blue.

"I don't want you getting sick, if your starting to get red just from this breeze!"

Ivan ponders his cheery suggestion, before lightly shrugging.

"Da, alright. I wasn't going to be doing anything after this anyways."

Alfred brightens, his eyes lighting up and a smile on his face. He pauses, then,

"Can you hold the umbrella, though? Despite hating having to admit it, you are taller than me."

Ivan chuckles at his small pout, before taking the umbrella out of his hands. He goes to open it, before Alfred stops him.

"Hey hey hey, do that once we step out into the rain!"

Ivan looks at him in confusion, a raised eyebrow screaming 'what for??'

"It's bad luck, remember? Never open an umbrella inside a room! That applies to roofs too!"

Ivan sighs in fond exasperation, before staying with a chuckle,

"You silly Americans, where you get that from I have no idea."

Alfred immediately starts to protest, indignantly protecting his people while Ivan just shakes his head and laughs.

Eventually, they step out into the rain, Ivan opening the umbrella over their heads. Ivan is startled when Alfred links his right arm in his left, looking down at hike curiously.

"I've gotta lead you to my house like the hero I am yeah? So, in order to not loose you, I'll direct you like this!"

He states proudly, inwardly ignoring the pink tint to his face.

'Shut up feelings, now is not the time!'

Ivan seems to relax, tension bleeding out of his shoulders. They

stand there in the rain for a while, just taking in the world around them. They bask in the calm, the sound of the rain soothing.

Eventually, Alfred steps forward and starts leading Ivan to his apartment. They converse continuously on the way there, their laughs able to be heard over the rain to passer-bys.

But, during all the hours spent in the Café, Alfred forgot his phone at his home. This, sadly, would lead to unforseen consequences.

Such as:

30+ missed calls from My Child (1) & others

-

Heyooo! Sorry this is so late, I legitimately forgot if I had to update today or tomorrow lmao. Asked Darina (lifesaver) and she double checked for me. My brain has been sooo scattered lately, studying is the absolute worst. ESPECIALLY. EMS. (Economic management sciences) God, I thought maths was hard, but dealing with the CRJ and CPJ too? Absolute hell, I tell you. Anyways, Goeiemorê, aand, middag of nag!

Chapter 11: The Acquiring of Friends

[image]

30+ missed calls from My Child (1) & others

-

Alfred opened the door to his apartment, motioning Ivan to follow him. Ivan hands him the umbrella as he steps in, observing the pictures in the hallway.

As Alfred shakes the water off of the umbrella, Ivan asks with a small smile,

"These are your children, da?"

Alfred turns, looking towards the aforementioned images.

"Ah, yep! All 50 of them. They all appeared as toddlers, so I sadly don't have any baby pictures."

He bemoans dramatically, striding up to stand next to Ivan. A genuine smile creeps up on him, and he points towards the specific states in each photo.

"That one there's Washington, you don't wanna get between her and work. Pennsylvania sits on the edge over here, she's of prussian descent, so sometimes has that 'Im awesome!' verbal tic."

His smile grows with each state he points to, Ivan making sure to memorise a name to a face.

'*Although I like bragging to him about my kids, what excatly are they gonna do when they meet him?*'

He ponders this until he reaches one of the last states,

"And there's Alaska!"

He says with joy, gesturing to one of the tallest in the picture. Ivan can't help it, he stares, shocked.

He looked... almost exactly like a mixture of him and Alfred. His nose, Alfred's golden hair, his violet eyes and Alfred's tan skin.

He stands there, gobsmacked, until Alfred took pity on him.

"You doing alright there buddy?"

Alfred asks, amusement radiating off of him in waves.

Ivan huffs, shaking his head.

"Perfect. I just.. wasn't expecting him to look like a combination of us."

Alfred laughs nervously as he makes his way to the living room, followed by Ivan.
They both collapse on the coach, sighing in relief.

"Well, he **was** called Russian America for a while, y'know? I guess that had some influence when it came to his looks."

Alfred pipes up, shrugging off his signature bomber jacket and throwing it carelessly over the couch where Ivan is seated.

Alfred freezes, patting himself down quickly.

'*aawwe shit. Where is my phone?*'

Frankly, Alfred couldn't even remember bringing it to the café. Suddenly, a memory strikes him and he rushes off to his bedroom, ignoring Ivan's confused look.

Nearly crashing into the bedside table in his haste, he mumbles for the charging phone. He quickly unplugs it, before taking a deep breath.

'*Please tell me no one called please tell me no one called-*'

He glances down.

"AUUUUUUGHHHH!"

-

Ivan glances up, startled at the loud groan of annoyance. He was sat on the couch, fingers playing with the fur on the neckline of Alfred's jacket.

'*What was that for? Is he alright?'*

Slightly unnerved, Ivan releases the jacket before standing up and slowly making his way to the doorframe.

"Alfred? Is everything alright?"

He calls outs, worriedly waiting for his response. He reaches up to tighten his scarf, a nervous tick of his.

"Yeah, all good! Everything's... Just fine!"

He hears Alfred echo back, although through gritted teeth. Footsteps sound through the hall as he hears Alfred open the bedroom door. Once Ivan is able to see his face again, he notices a slight tick of frustration he hadn't seen before.

Ivan stares as he approaches him, his socked feet making no sound on the wooden floor. When he finally gets to him, Alfred plops his head down onto Ivan's chest.

This shocks Ivan, as he goes stock still waiting for Alfred to move. Seeing as he isn't doing anything, he slowly moves his arms around him, embracing him in a light hug. One that's comforting, but stills makes it easy for him to escape.

Alfred sighs, bone-deep and weary.

"Some of my states are coming over."

Ivan hums.

"Is that not a good thing?"

"Yeah well, when you haven't told your kids you've become friends with a guy you went to war with, you can only assume what their reactions are gonna be."

Alfred complained, sagging deeper into Ivan.

But Ivan didn't mind.

His thoughts were still running wild, on one specific word.

'*He.. considers us friends?'*

Slowly, hesitantly, Ivan asks,

"You.. consider us friends?"

Alfred freezes, detaching himself from Ivan,

"Sorry, are we not? Is, is it too fast? I'd just assumed that-"

He pauses.

He feels something drip onto his hand from where he still clung to Ivan.

"Ivan?"

"..Da?"

"..are you.. are you crying?"

"..Da.."

Alfred's eyes soften, and he asks Ivan,

"What for?"

Ivan chuckles as he wipes away tears, his violet eyes sparkling as he does so.

"It's... Been so long since I've had a friend. Thank you, Alfred, for

giving me another chance."

Alfred laughs along with him, all pretense of sadness now dissipating into the air.

"Hey, thank you for putting up with me again. Not many people can do that, y'know?"

He teases, wagging a finger in Ivans direction. They both dissolve into small fits of laughter, Alfred still clutching Ivan's arm and Ivan swiping away the remainder of his tears.

As they continue, they fail to notice an insistent knock on the door. One that gets louder, and louder, and louder, until-

SLAM

"OI, PA! WATCHU DOING NOT ANSWERING YOUR PHONE?? MAKING US THINK SOMEONE GOT TO YOU OR-"

"..."

"Pa, who the fuck is that?"

-

Heyoo, I am so tired rn lmao so sorry this is late. I want to thank the people who commented on chapter 8,9 and 10, you both literally made my day. Anyways, I'll try to stick to the every second day updating, but as soon as exams start next week I might have to switch to every 3-4 days. Also, regarding the states looks/ appearances, I want to leave that up to you guys. Obviously, I'll give gender, accent and eye colour, but I want the rest to be up to y'all. You decide what you think they look like, there's no canon for them, so that makes it all the more fun! Anyways, Goeiemorê, aand middag of nag!

Chapter 12: The Protective One

[image]

"Pa, who the fuck is that?"

-

Alfred wrenches his hand away from Ivan as if he'd been burned, quickly standing in front of him in a measly attempt to block him from view.

A wary smile graces his face, waving to his child currently standing in his doorway.

"Heyyy, Texas. It's been a while. How have you been?"

He glances back at Ivan, motioning with a tilt of his head to 'get the fuck out of the room before he dies' with a panicked look.

Ivan glances at Texas curiously, but, upon noting his murderous glare, prefers to live another day and scurries off to the kitchen.

'*Hopefully he'll stay there if he wants to keep those pretty eyes of his.*'

Alfred muses with a grimace. Texas always had a thing about going for the eyes, and never grew out of it (to Alfred's dismay).

"You didn't answer my question, Pa. Who, the hell, is he?"

Texas strides into the room, slamming the door behind him. He crosses his arms over his chest, his glare softening as he looks at his father.

He'd always been the protective one, ever since the civil war his protective instincts just seemed to have doubled.

Alfred always complains about it, saying how 'IM the parent!' and 'im supposed to be protective of you, not the other way around!'

"Look, it's just another nation friend I have over, alright? Nothing more, nothing less."

Alfred sighs, staring back at Texas. His eyes harden with suspicion, evident in his tone as he asks,

"Aight. What's his name then?"

Silence.

Very, very awkward silence.

Alfred whistles, rocking on his heels while looking away from Texas's pointed stare. He smiles hesitantly as he raises an eyebrow, a clear 'well?'

"..Russia."

"WHAT!?"

Texas's mouth drops open in disbelief as he's stunned into silence. Alfred puts his head in his hands in defeat, before taking a deep breath and saying,

"Look, I didn't want you guys to find out this way-"

"Find out what Pa? That the one nation, who, and let me remind ya, YOU WENT TO WAR WITH, IS JUST CASUALLY CHILLING IN YOUR HOUSE, LIKE NOTHING HAPPEND?!"

Texas seethes, face red in anger. Alfred winces, a guilty look crossing his face. He responds with,

"Ivan and I have sorted things out, we're working on it alright?"

"IVAN?!"

Texas walks to the couch, before collapsing onto it in shock. He sits there, and starts to laugh. Hysterically, and in disbelief.

It seems like forever, but he eventually turns to his father, still shocked but expecting answers. Alfred feels conflicted, but he

knows he deserves honesty.

"Listen, Texas. I may have problems with Russia. We still have tensions, and our governments still hate eachother. But not Ivan."

Alfred walks over and sits beside Texas as he speaks, pulling him into a side hug. Texas relaxes into it, laying his head on Alfred shoulder.

They stay like that for a while, waiting until they both come down from their emotional high. Alfred takes the time to observe his son, and just how much he's grown.

'*Hes nearly as tall as me at this stage*'

Hes startled out of his thoughts when Texas speaks.

"So that's how you're doing it huh?"

Texas sighs. Alfred nods, tightening his hold. He can hear Ivan in the kitchen, likely exploring the cupboards and it's items hidden inside.

"Can't say I believe it'll help anything, but as long as you're happy."

Texas relents, groaning as Alfred ruffles his hair. He escapes his half hug, turning to him with a raised eyebrow and asking,

"...How did this.. friendship.. of y'all's, even come about, Pa? Last meeting I remember you hated eachothers guts!"

"Haha, funny story.."

-

Ivan pauses in his scouting as he hears loud shouting coming from the other room. Normally, he would've gone and checked if Alfred was alright, but something in that child's eyes told him he'd stay out of it if he valued his life.

In the meantime, he'd been searching through Alfred's kitchen and observing the many, many pictures on the walls. Fondly, Ivan

recalls how excited Alfred was with the invention of the camera.

He'd immediately been invited over, and together they'd taken a picture with one another.

'*I wonder where that picture is now?'*

Ivan ponders, sliding his gloves hand over the marble. Alfred and his child, Texas if he recalls correctly from memory, seemed to have quietened down now, and with a quick glance to the clock reveals about an hour has passed.

He freezes as the door to the kitchen creaks open. Slowly, he turns around to see Texas standing menacingly in the doorway.

"So."

Ivan gulps.

"You gonna explain your intentions with my Pa?"

And shivers.

"Or do I have to carve it out of ya?"

Ivan is so fucked.

-

Heyoo! Lmao I actually loved writing this one. Just wanted to say, GlissBunBun666, I absolutely love your comments, they've left me cackling each time I see a new one pop up. Actually, just thanks to those in general who've commented. I read each one (though there's not many) and it means a lot to me. Anyways, I need sleep, so Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 13: The Shovel Talk

[image]

"So."

Ivan gulps.

"You gonna explain your intentions with my Pa?"

And shivers.

"Or do I have to carve it out of ya?"

Ivan is so fucked.

-

A tense silence overtook the cosy kitchen, a staring competition erupting between them. Texas was unrelenting and unyeilding, and the longer it went on the more nervous Ivan got.

He tried not to let it show, his expression becoming a blank slate, but it was obvious with how his hand twitched to tug his scarf up and cover his face.

Texas's scowl deepens, his grip on the doorframe tightening, to the point Ivan worried he would crack it.

"Answer my question, Fuck face."

Ivan startles at his blunt statement, and he ponders it for a few seconds. He hurries to answer, noting the ever deeping look of 'im gonna beat your ass' on Texas's face.

'*Hopefully, this satisfies him..'*

"I want to.. rebuild our friendship-"

"BULL-SHIT."

Ivan steps back as Texas shouts out, his chest heaving. He watches nervously as he stalked forward, yanking Ivans scarf (and him) down to eye level.

"What makes ya think I'd believe **you** of all people? I might've not been the earliest state to come around, but I sure as hell was there when you decided to break it off."

He snarls, hurt and murder evident in his eyes. The hold on his scarf increases in pressure dangerously, on the verge of choking Ivan.

"What makes ya think ya have the right to hurt him again?"

They stand there, eye to eye. Face to face.
Ivan sighs, then admits,

"I don't. The only reason I proposed this new friendship of ours, was to protect you and your siblings. Never, have I **ever** thought of using it to hurt him."

Texas scoffs as he releases Ivan, stepping back as he folds his arms over his chest. Ivan rubs at the scars on his neck, hidden by his scarf. The skin feels slightly irritated, likely from the near choking.

"Yeah well, that's what we thought the first time until Pa came home crying."

Ivan winces in guilt, the day flashing through his memory quickly. He sighs, glancing at Texas and his furious glare that strikes the fear of god into him.

"Listen, Texas."

He stares at Ivan, an eyebrow raised in a 'go on?' statement so similar to his father Ivan almost stumbles.

"I promise to you, on my authority as a nation, I will not betray this friendship. It may not seem like much, but like your father, I've been.. lonely."

He whispers into the silence, eyes glazed and looking away. He

continues when Texas doesn't speak,

"I just want my friend back."

They stand there for a while. Eventually, Texas sighs, and Ivan glances back up.

"I have noticed how happy Pa's been over calls and texts."

Texas admits, and a ghost of a smile appears over Ivan's face. Texas quickly goes back to scowling at him,

"That doesn't mean you can go and ruin this again, you hear me?!"

Texas shouts, grabbing Ivan by the ear this time and bringing him back down a head. Ivan yelps, going to protest at the pain, but then Texas whispers into Ivan's ear, looking at him straight in the eyes,

"And if you want to keep those pretty little violet eyes of yours, you'll treat him well, yes? I haven't added purple to my collection yet, so mark my words I **will not** hesitate."

He further solidifies the idea by brandishing a black hunters knife from god knows where, holding it up to Ivans neck. Ivan subtly shakes, yet his face seems unchanged. On the inside is completely different.

'What is wrong with this child?? If this is just one of 50, how are the others going to react to me??'

Ivan gulps.

'*Now I see why Alfred was so hesitant..'*

Ivan is finally released after Texas seems to think he's held him hostage long enough. Ivan quickly straightens, backs up a few steps and sighs in relief.

Texas takes note of that.

"I promise."

Ivan states with conviction, trying to convey his emotions through his voice. Texas watches him for a moment, then sighs as he puts away the knife.

"If you say so, pal. Doesn't mean I won't be waiting for you to fuck up."

Ivan nods, accepting that. Some things don't just happen on their own, needing work and trust to be out in.

"Just be glad I got to you first, California would've burnt you to a crisp."

Ivan opens his mouth hesitantly to ask, but is cut off,

"No, not metaphorically. She likes to commit arson on the daily, and you would've been her new target. Still will be once she finds out"

Texas mumbles that last sentence under his breath, but Ivan hears it loud as day. He backs into the counter, further away from Texas. His thoughts run rampant.

'*Alfred, I mean this in the nicest way possible, what the fuck is wrong with these children??*'

Texas glares at Ivan, but a cruel smirk erupts on his face,

"Or we can just give you up to Florida."

Ivan waits for any further information, but Texas doesn't speak any further.

Somehow, that makes Ivan pale faster than anything that's been said about the other states.

'*Dear god, what have I gotten myself into?*'

-

Heyoo! This was so fun to write lmao, I was literally smiling the whole way through. Anyways, just a heads up, I'm going to update

on Sunday again, but after that I'm gonna have to only update every four days. Sucky, I know, but I need to study/practice for exams sadly. Anyways, hope you've enjoyed, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 14: The Nickname

[image]

'Dear god, what have I gotten myself into?'

-

Once their tense shovel talk had finally commenced, they made their way back to the living room where Alfred waited.

Ivan entered and stood a good few feet away from Texas, but close enough to Alfred. He looks up with a smile from the TV, but then noticed Ivans paler than normal face.

"What did you say to him, Son?"

Alfred deadpanned, turning to Texas with a raised eyebrow. Texas gives a feral grin, saying,

"We just had a good ol' chat, nothing much."

Both of Alfred's eyebrows now raised, he looks over to Ivan. Seeing how he avoids eye contact, he sighs, then pins Texas with an annoyed glare.

"You can't just go around threatening my friends, Texas. I'm more than capable of doing that myself."

Texas scoffs in disbelief, mumbling under his breath. Seeing as he's distracted, Ivan hesitantly walks over and sits next to Alfred on the couch. Better close to him than away where Alfred can't intervene should Texas decide to act on his threats.

Ivan shudders.

'*I don't know where these children got their glares from, not even Natalya has made me fear such threats from a look.'*

He pauses.

'Somewhat.'

He's snapped back into the present when Alfred gets up from the couch, leading Texas to the door. They're chatting happily, Alfred seeming to be glowing. Ivan gives a small smile, eyes softening as he looks at father and son interact.

Texas laughs as Alfred ruffles his hair, bringing him into a bear hug. Texas opens his eyes to glare at Ivan over Alfred's shoulder, mouthing '*Watch your back.'*

What little colour he had regained was quickly lost, and Ivan can only watch helplessly as Texas exits with an accomplished smirk.

The door closed without much fanfare, Alfred sighing in exhaustion. Turning to Ivan, he asks,

"You sure you're alright? I know Texas can be a bit.. **much,** but I promise it's only because he gets overprotective at times."

Alfred walks back to the couch, sitting next to Ivan and leaning back into the cushion. Ivan seems to unfreeze, his expression now showing emotion, though his hands have a minute shake to them.

"I assure you Fredka, it will take more than a few threats to make me back down."

Alfred chuckles humourously, the moonlight dancing on his skin. Ivan gives a small smile, laughing along with him.

"In all seriousness though, you might have to stick close to me when other states come around. Especially if you start calling me nicknames."

Ivan grimaces. Alfred just continued to laugh at him. He sighs, slumping onto the pillows.

"Are they really all that bad?"

Ivan turns his head to Alfred, face half squished in the comfortable fabric. Alfred just chuckles nervously, turning his face away.

Ivan sighs.

"They are, aren't they?"

Alfred turns back, rising to his kids defence with only a slight (verrry little) hint of hesitation,

"Not all of them! Sure, some might be out for your blood, but others might only glare at you for a bit and you'll be on your way!"

Alfred says triumphantly, crossing his arms over his chest with a smirk. Unsurprisingly, this does little to ease his nerves.

Ivan groans, before looking at the clock, noting the late hour. Alfred just nods as he turns his head back to him, gesturing with a hand to 'follow him'.

They get up off the couch, Alfred leading Ivan to a spare bedroom down the hall. The door swings open, revealing a cozily decorated space with a twin sized bed and sky coloured walls.

As Ivan walks in and observed his surroundings with interest, Alfred leans on the doorway with crossed arms, watching him with a content smile.

"There should be some clothing in the drawers that'll fit you, might be a size small though. I'll do washing tomorrow morning, that way you can get your original clothes back before you leave."

Alfred says softly, chuckling as Ivan flops onto the bed childishly.

"Thank you, Alfred. For everything."

Ivan calls out as Alfred turns to leave the room. Alfred pauses, then says,

"No problem, Ivan. See you in the morning?"

"Da."

Alfred nods goodnight, closing the door behind him. Ivan sighs, switching on the lamp on the bedside table. He gets up, searching

through the cupboard for pajamas and, ironically, finding one with little flowers on them.

Amused, he slips them on and walks back to the bed. As he lies there, trying to fall asleep, he can't help but think of how happy he'd been lately.

'*Alfred always had that affect on me.'*

He thought, giddy. And unlike all the nights before, Ivan fell quickly to the grasp of sleep, dreaming of fields of sunflowers and a bright blue sky.

-

Heyooo! Yes, I'm sorry, it's that time. Time to leave you all on a cliffhanger for 4 days!! I'm sooo sorry, but I promise to do well in my exams for you all! Luckily we get a day off Wednesday for voting day, so extra study time thankfully. Not like this country can be run tino the ground anymore than it actually is, but oh well. Anyways, I hope you've enjoyed, (thanks again for 1k+ reads btw) and Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 15: The Canadians Interlude (1)

[image]

As the sun started to shine through the windows, Ivan slowly but surely woke from his slumber. It had been one of the best he'd ever had, and as he began to wake, he moved to stretch his arms-

"Enjoy your good nights rest, did you bastard?"

A dark voice snarled. Ivan's eyes snap open, and there, leaning above him with a knife pressed to his sensitive throat, is Canada.

But how excatly did it come to this point?
Let's go back a few chapters, hmm?

-

Canada watched nervously as America exited the meeting room, subtly shaking. He can tell from a mile away his brother was in emotional distress. Canada stays silent, waiting until he hears his footsteps pass. Then, he waits until he hears another set of footsteps, and out comes Russia.

Canada immediately scowls, glaring deeply at Russia. He'd always disliked him for sitting on him during a meeting once, but hurting his brother emotionally? Canada absolutely won't stand for it. He couldn't care less if they fought physically, as he knows his brother can take care of himself. But when it comes to emotions, he's always been a bit sensitive, though he tried to hide it.

Canada's eyes are locked onto Russia, watching from the other side of the hall as he walks out. He doesn't know what Russia did, but he's going to find out. And when he does?

' Theres going to be hell to pay.'

-

Canada was walking down the street, umbrella in hand as he scrolled through his phone. He rests on a bench under a canopy, watching the drizzle with faint interest. His mind has been out of sorts lately, and no matter how many times America assured him he was okay, he still worried.

A glint of silver caught his eye, and Canada immediately zeros in on it. His once content smile has now deepened into a frown. There Russia was, entering a café not too far from where he was standing.

'*What is he doing in a place like that?'*

Canada did not think highly of Russia, in fact, he didn't think he was even capable of being normal. He goes to stand and interrogate him, but stops in shock. Just a few minutes later, he sees his brother rushing through the rain towards that very same café.

Canada just stands there, wide eyed and still. He watches through the window as America and Russia sit in the same booth, and seem to.. get along?

Instantly, anger boils up inside of Canada. His expression hardens, his eyes go cold.

'Who does this bastard think he is?'

He seethes, eyes trying to glare a hole through Russia's head.

'*He's trying to get into Alfie's head again, I bet.'*

Canada grumbles mentally, watching as the rain picks up. He doesn't know how long he stands there, scrolling through his phone while waiting. Eventually, the doorbell rings, and they both step out into the rain. Canada follows them with his eyes, noting the path they take. His eyes widened in shock as he realises just where America is taking him.

Never, in a million years, would he reveal his states to Russia. So why excatly is he taking him to his apartment full of their pictures? This, sadly, only dooms Russia further, and increases Canadas belief

that he is trying to manipulate America.

'*This russian bastard-'*

Canada may not have the guts to attack Russia, the nation everyone fears, but **Matthew** sure does.

-

Now, Canada is not someone who jumps into action immediately, unlike his brother. You never plan a murder out loud, after all.

His grip on his hockey stick tightens, just an inch away from cracking the slim wood. He'd been practicing on the ice for a bit, to gather his nerves before he went and hunted down Russia. Canada sets the stick down on the table, getting up and heading to the kitchen. He sees his bear - Kumaji or something? Sitting by his food bowl.

Looking down at him, an idea pops into his head.

'I wonder.. if I bribe him, will he bite the bastard?'

He ponders, staring at the bears beady black eyes.

"Feed me!"

Canada groans, before picking up the bowl and setting some dead fish inside.

'Nevermind, he's as dumb as a rock. He can't help.'

He shakes his head, turning back to his arsenal of weapons. Canada takes a deep breath, steeling his nerves. He walks to his door, calling out softly to the bear,

"I'm leaving now!"

"Okay. Who are you again?"

Canada can only groan in annoyance, shaking his head. As he locks the door and starts to follow the path to America's apartment, he

can barely keep the viscous scowl off of his face.

'*My knife is going to have a special place in that russian bastards throat.'*

-

And now, here they are, at a standstill. Russia, a knife against his throat, and Canada, the one who wields it.

Inwardly, Russia can only sigh.

'Just how many more times am I going to be threatened?'

He winces as the knife presses deeper.

"Cat caught your tongue? "

Russia looks at him with a slight hint of annoyance, but immediately backtracks at the burning anger on the others face.

'*Shit, wait, this is the war criminal. Oh god I'm so dead. It's alright, play it cool Ivan you'll be fine.'*

"Not like I can say much with a knife pressed against my throat, hmm?"

'*...'*

'IDIOT!'

-

Heyoo y'all! Goddamn, what a week. We wrote our Natural Sciences test today, and hooolly shit. Legitimately, I looked to my right, and saw the atheist kid crossing themselves and praying. AND THEY WERE ONE OF THE SMART ONES TOO!! Needless to say I went into that exam shit scared. I think I did alright though, so I'm feeling okay. Anyways, I've rambled enough, sorry for my long departure once again, but I hope you've enjoyed! Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 16: The Canadians Interlude (2)

[image]

"Not like I can say much with a knife pressed against my throat, hmm?"

'...'

'*IDIOT!'*

-

Canada's bemused expression instantly hardens, his eyes becoming icy. His grip on the knife tightens, his frown deepening.

"Let's make something clear."

Canada's quiet voice seems loud in the silence.

"I **know** you Russia. And over the years, I've seen you do unspeakable things."

Ivans expression doesn't change, but he inwardly grimaces.

"But I've seen worse. **Done** worse. So you don't scare me."

Canada wrenches the knife away, then proceeds to grab Ivan by the collar of his pajamas, lifting him off the bed and slamming him into the wall. He may not be as strong as his brother, but his strength is not to be trifled with.

"But you want to know something? Seeing you with my brother? Didn't make me angry, like it should've. It **scared** me. Because I remember, Russia. I was **there.**"

They both know exactly what he's referring to.

"So you better listen now, and listen well. Should I **ever** hear you threaten, hurt or make my brother cry again.. well."

Canada takes the knife out again and buries it into the wall next to Ivans head, cutting off a few strands of hair.

"Lets just say, my hockey stick will have found its new home. Preferably, through your ass and out your mouth."

With that last growled out sentence, Canada releases him and starts walking to the door. But, just as hes about to leave, he stops. Turns around, and punches Ivan square in the stomach. While he's keeled over, Canada decides to kick him where it hurts just for good measure.

With that, he strides out of the room, leaving Ivan on the floor gasping in pain.

Hell hath no fury like an enraged brother, they say.

-

Ivan groans lightly in pain as he stands, wincing at the now formed bruise near his pec.

'*Hopefully, Alfred doesn't notice*'

Ivan sighs as he starts to get dressed, noting his now clean clothes folded neatly on the cabinet.

Ivan smiles softly.

'*He always has been so kind.*'

He dresses, rewinding the bandages on his neck and covering it with his scarf. Once he's finished, he walks over and opens the bedroom door silently. He gets a whiff of pancakes coming from the kitchen, the scent filling the house.

The echoes of a conversation and laughter can be heard throughout the house, and Ivan can only sigh.

'*When can it be just me and Fredka in his house?'*

Ivan laments, but knows he can't control it. He strolls down the hall, keeping his footsteps light despite his heavy stature. Upon entering the kitchen, he spots Canada flipping pancakes by the stove while Alfred sits on the chairs by the island.

Alfred turns upon his entry, waving at him with a brilliant smile that lights up the room and motioning for Ivan to sit next to him. Canada takes note of this, and give a scathing glare when Alfred isn't looking.

When Alfred glances away, Ivan glares back. To be completely honest, he could have easily overpowered Canada. But, sadly, he's Alfred's brother, and harming him in his own home would not be a great way to say 'im your friend!'. So, he resorts to glares and nasty looks thrown over shoulders.

Once Ivan is seated, Alfred glances over from where he asked Canada something. With a bright smile, he says, "Morning Ivan! Good to see you up! Sleep well?"

With a quick, annoyed look at Canada, he gives a genuine but small smile. "I did, da. Thank you for letting me stay for the night."

With his response, Alfred seems to light up, smile widening. "That's great! It's no biggie, by the way. The hero always makes sure people stay warm!" He jokes, sending a wink Ivan's way. Ivan's face takes on a light blush, and Canadas expression can only twitch in the presence of his brother.

"Oh yeah! This is Matthew, Mattie for short! Hes Canada, I don't know if you remember him-"

Alfred says, but is cut off when Ivan waves his hand.

"No need, I remember him. Vividly."

This answer confuses Alfred, but he shrugs it off and starts collecting plates. His brother goes with him, not before sending a 'im watching you' look to Ivan.

Ivan scoffs, but stands up to help. He's quickly stopped by Alfred, who rushes him back to his seat.

"You stay there, you haven't even had breakfast yet! I'll make you something once Mattie leaves, whatcha think?"

Ivan nods in agreement, his elbow leaning on the table and chin in his hand as he watches Alfred scurry around the kitchen. He can feel his skin prickle, knowing that Canada is watching him. He doesn't particularly care, Canada can watch him all he wants. Right now, he's only got eyes for Alfred.

When that thought crosses his mind, it stumps him.

'Only for him? Makes me sound like some love-sick fool.'

Ivan grouses internally. Then, he processes that thought, and startles.

'*Wait.'*

He thinks back to his behaviour regarding Alfred this past week. Unconsciously staring at his smile, always noting how his hair shines in sunlight, how-

"Hellooo! Earth to Ivan?"

He's brought out of his thoughts by Alfred's waving hands in front of his face. Alfred chuckles upon seeing his disgruntled expression.

"Wow, with how often I've got to bring you back down here, I'dve thought you were an alien!"

Alfred pokes lightly at Ivan's cheeks, smirking. He's noticed Ivan has been slightly out of it today, and it's been concerning him.

Ivan gives a small giggle, and Alfred immediately zeros in on it.

"Awww, your laugh is adorable!"

He gushes, and Ivan's face turns ablaze. He pulls his scarf up to cover his bashful smile, to the disappointment of Alfred.

'God, I really am in love, aren't I?'

Ivan sighs and listens to Alfred chatting his ear off. He can deal with these thoughts later, when there isn't a murderous brother out for his blood.
Speaking of which, Ivan glances over to the kitchen doorway where Canada stands. On the outside, he looks nervous, even frail. But Ivan knows better.

His eyes are hard and there's a slight twitch to his smile. His fingers grasp at air like it's Ivans throat.

This deeply amuses and simultaneously scares the shit out of Ivan.

Thankfully, he's saved from being strangled by Alfred tackling his brother, Canada just able to continue standing with Alfred hanging off of him.

Alfred drags him to the door, arm around his shoulder. His brother has a soft smile on his face, and they continue to talk as the door closes. Ivan is left alone, with only his thoughts to comfort him.

He takes this alone time to think.

What excatly are his feelings for Alfred?

And what does this mean for them?

Ivan can only sigh.

-

Heyooo! Author here, little bit of a longer chapter to make up for my longer absence! Also, I just think Alfred's a gentleman kinda guy *cough* England *cough* so he always walks his guests to the door. I think next chapter, I'll do Alfreds Pov of this one, if that isn't too boring. Just seven school days left of exams, god I can't wait for this to be over. Anyways, hope you've enjoyed, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 17: The Brothers

[image]

Alfred groaned as a loud beeping awoke him. Grumbling, he hit his hand on the table, trying multiple times to turn it off. After an embarrassing amount of fails, the sound stops and he slowly sits up.

He hops out of bed quietly, bare feet making contact with the carpeted floor. Alfred streches, a crack echoing through the room. He sighs in relief, tense muscles relaxing. Quickly dressing himself, he heads out into the still dark hallway. Laundry under his arm, he stops by where Ivan is sleeping, and steps in softly.

He tries to avoid looking at Ivan as he collects the clothes he wore the day before. His face is on fire, yet he has no idea why. He's just doing a favour for a friend, right? No need to be weird about it.

Just as he's about to leave the room, he stops, sighs, and looks at him. Ivan lay peacefully sleeping, quiet snores escaping him every few seconds. He's cocooned in his blankets, eyebrows scrunched up.

Alfred's heart feels as if it's about to burst.

'*Holy shit that is the cutest thing I've ever seen-*'

He shakes his head uncomfortablely, leaving the room hastily. His face is redder than the tomato's Romano is so fond of, and he can feel it spreading to his ears.

He hurries to wash the laundry, throwing it into the washing machine and eventually placing it into the dryer. He leaves it for a bit, choosing to rather get a coffee to wake him up. His face still feels warm, but thankfully he's calmed down.

'*Wonder what ill make for breakfast?*'

Alfred ponders, slowly sipping th hot drink. A knock on his door startles him out of his thoughts, and he glances warily at the door.

Deep down, he quietly hopes it not one of his states. He doesn't know if Texas has told the others, but based on Ivan's face when confronted, it wasn't good. Alfred hopes to avoid another situation like that, as he doesn't want to scare him off.

'*To be fair, he **is** Russia. I don't think their combined efforts will stop him if he was able to deal with me over the years.*'

Despite this, Alfred still worries. Their friendship isn't as fragile as it was in the beginning, but anything can happen in a matter of minutes.

The knock sounds again, and Alfred sighs as he stands up. He mourns his coffee, downing it before walking towards the door. It's still early, around 6. He doesn't know who'd be at his door at this time, except for-

"Mattie!"

Alfred happily exclaimed, excited to see his brother. He dragged him into a bear hug, his brother giving a soft 'oof' at the pressure.

"Hello Alfred. How have you been?"

Matthew said softly, purple eyes gleaming. Alfred immediately began to ramble about everything that had happened the past few days (leaving a few details out while he's at it). Alfred knows just how protective Matthew can get, and he doesn't want him to go after Ivan.

Remembering what happened earlier, his cheeks don a light pink, catching Matthews attention.

"Are you okay, Alfie?"

Matthew asks, concern evident in his brother's eyes. Alfred just nods, mind elsewhere. Alfred absentmindedly leads his brother to the kitchen, and they sit down at the table.

"Hey Mattie, can you make some of those pancakes for us? Preeetttyy please?"

Alfred begs, bringing out the watery blue puppy dog eyes he knows works so well on his brother. He only has to wait a few seconds before Matthews resolve breaks, and he sighs softly. He goes to grab the ingredients, fondly ignoring Alfred's 'yes!' in the background.

Alfred remembers Ivan's clothes in the dryer that's likely done by now, and judging by the sunlight streaming through the kitchen windows, he'll need it soon.

"Hey Mattie, I'll be right back. Just gonna do my heroic duties and drop off some clothes!"

He jokes before walking off, not noticing the gleam in his brother's eyes. Alfred pushes open the door to the laundry room, sighing.

'*Hopefully Ivan is nice to Matthew. I know he can take care of himself, but I don't like seeing my brother ignored.*'

He collects the clothes, carefully folding them. Standing up, he swiftly walks out of the room, striding down the hallway. Alfred slowly pushes open Ivan's door, walking towards the cabinet. Placing the now folded clothing down, he turns around.

He chuckles lightly, seeing Ivan hasn't moved a bit. He admires him for a bit, just standing there. Quickly, he snaps out of it, practically running out of the room.

'*What the hell is wrong with me today? This is the second time! So what if he's pretty! That doesn't mean I can just stand and stare at him in his sleep!*'

This poor, sweet summer child. So deep in denial about what's happening he's passed Davie down in the grave.

Alfred continues to fight with himself, making his way back to the kitchen where his brother has sat out a plate of pancakes for them both. Alfred sighs as he sits down, almost moaning at the taste of the delicious breakfast. Mathew chuckles at the look on his face, following his brother's lead. His, of course, was absolutely soaked in maple syrup, but that's just what he likes.

They continue to converse, both content to stay in eachothers

company. It had been quite a while since it had just been the two of them together, and Alfred missed it deeply.

Matthew stands up, and Alfred gives him a raised eyebrow.

"Bathroom."

Matthew says with his soft voice, though something downright deadly shone in his eyes. Alfred, of course, did not notice this and gave him a nod.

A few minutes later, Matthew comes strolling back in, strangely satisfied. His back is tense, fists clenched. Alfred gives him a concerned glance, but Matthew just waves him off.

Ivan walks in about 15 minutes after him, face blank. Alfred turns around to greet him, instantly lighting up.

'*He looks sort of frazzled. I'll ask him if something happened when mat leaves.*'

He doesn't voice his concerns out loud, instead introducing Ivan to his brother. He doesn't notice the tense air between them, instead continuing to happily munch on his pancakes while speaking to Ivan.

He promises to make Ivan some once theyve cleaned up, dragging his brother around the kitchen.

"Pass me that plate, please Mattie?"

"Okay, Alfie."

They work together quickly, and eventually the kitchen is sparkling. Alfred turns to his brother, who is looking at Ivan with a glance he can't decipher. Something deep in his heart curls, and jealousy spikes.

'*Ivan is **my** friend.*'

Immediately, Alfred is disgusted with his own behaviour. Matthew is his brother, why would he care for Ivan? Despite this, he still

subtly starts to steer Matthew towards the door, leaving Ivan behind in a stupor. Alfred closes the door behind him once they exit, and turns to face his brother, who has a concerned look on his face.

"Are you sure about him, Alfie? That it won't turn out like last time?"

Alfred sighs. He's getting pretty fed up with how many times he's been asked that specific question.

"I'm sure, bro. I wouldn't do it if I thought that would happen."

Alfred just so happened to leave their deal out of what he told Matthew. But it's alright, he doesn't need to know.

Matthew sighs, but nods nonetheless. Alfred grabs his brother into a hug again, this one more emotional than others.

"Come visit again soon? It's been awhile since we've hung out together."

Alfred whispers into his shoulder. Matthew says into him, eyes softening when he looks away.

"I'll be sure to."

Matthew replies quietly, stepping away. He goes to leave, but stops before saying,

"Be careful, okay Alfred?"

"I promise."

-

Goddamn that was a long one. So uh, heyoo, good to see y'all again. We had geography today and oh boy our class average is not looking good. But, not to worry, I've got two exams left. THEN ITS HOLIDAY BABY YAASS!! Anyways, before I leave this chapter off, I want to show you all a chant us school children sang about our 'lovely' president once upon a time. Really, we still say it occasionally, but it's mostly to make fun of him.

Daar is ń boomslang
(boomslang)
Wat in die boom hang
(boom hang)
Ek skrik my boeglam
(boeglam)
Vir die boomslang (boomslang)
En ek sê
hoya (hoya)
hoya hoya (hoya)

Ek sê vir Jacob
(Jacob)
Jacob Zuma
(Zuma)
In ń täxi
(täxi)
Hy lyk so sexy
(sexy)
En ek sê hoya
(hoya)
hoya hoya
(hoya)

Anyways, with that, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 18: The Confronters of Love

[image]

What excatly did it mean for their relationship?

-

Ivan sighs, a deeply conflicted look crossing his face. This was uncharted territory he was falling into, and Ivan's not sure if he'd like to continue.

Ivan knows he isn't the most likeable. Canada proved it, Texas proved it, hell, the uneasy glances he gets from other countries proved it. Ivan had never been able to properly express his emotions, a result of long isolation with just his sisters for company. Even then, a deep loneliness followed him.

Ivan thought that, if no one wanted to be friends with him, he'll **make them** his friends. But that idea didn't turn out so well, and only ended up with the nations hating him further.

Except for Alfred.

In all of his long, long years, Alfred was the first person to not be scared. To not instantly run away at the first sight of him, to scream in terror at his aura. Sure, he was a young nation, just barely out of his independence, but to Ivan? That didn't matter. There America was, the first nation to go out of his way to be friendly. There Alfred was, making an effort to get to know him.

And Ivan went and ruined it.

Their friendship was strong before the world wars. But deep down, Ivan could feel tensions rising between their countries. This had a lasting effect on both of them, Ivan more so. Their conversations became tense, but not unfriendly. Alfred tried desperately to get

through to Ivan, to talk to him. But Ivan could only stay silent.

When world war two had commenced, it happened.

Their fight was unlike anything anyone had ever seen before, especially between two countries. Their voices had echoed through the halls, blood was smeared across each other's faces. Two seething nations stood before the other, various wounds across their bodies. For Ivan, his neck. For Alfred, his back. It took many a nation present at the time to drag them away from each other, and even then the glares sent would manage to send them into a fit of rage.

The meetings after that were never the same. The Cold War was a haze for Ivan, his corrupt government almost taking over his mind fully. But he was aware of everything. He was conscious. And eventually, every meeting, every interaction, was a fight. Whether it be physical, verbal or mental. They managed to get on eachothers nerves, like moths drawn to the flame.

Ivan never understood how he could blind himself so quickly. Lock himself away from his family, from Alfred, his only friend. Turn his back, despite the tears that never were able to fall from his eyes.

Ivan has never forgiven himself for it. He doesn't think he ever will.

So this brings him here. Alone, on the couch, with the lingering smell of pancakes in the air. Ivan groans, his head falling into his hands.

'*Theres no way I love him. We have just become friends again, I could just be confused.*'

He sucks in a breath as images of Alfred throughout the years flash through his mind, as if to prove him wrong. Instances of their friendship, how they both grew. For better and for worse. The battle wages in his mind, back and forth.

'Fuck. I love him. I love Alfred so goddamn much.'

'But he would hate me for this!'

'No, Alfred is understanding. He wouldn't.. he wouldn't hate me for it...

Right?'

Ivan hesitates. Alfred has always been a very forgiving person, something Ivan has never been able to understand. Why forgive your enemies when they have wronged you? But then again, Alfred has always been the better one between them. Just as powerful, yes, but better.

But this time, Ivan doesn't know if he'll reciprocate his feelings. They'd only recently rekindled their friendship, and despite not walking on eggshells anymore, Ivan is still nervous.

But slowly, an idea starts to form.

'*I will slowly show signs of my affection over the next few days, to see how he responds. Loving him is no excuse to rush things*.'

Ivan inwardly sighs, but knows he's correct. It hurts, but healing a broken bond takes time. It also lets him plan.

'*Once our bond has strengthend, I will tell him. Hopefully, these next few however-long-it-takes, I can keep my... unruly thoughts to myself.'*

'I refuse to love him, just to lose him again.'

-

Alfred sighed as he watched his brother go, dragging a hand down his face. Now, to confront that ugly, curling jealousy in his heart.

What was causing it?

'*Ive never felt* ***that*** *much jealousy over a friend before. Seriously, what's up with me?'*

Alfred ponders, confused, leaning against the door. It's early morning, so no one is roaming the halls. It's only Alfred, himself, and the silence.

Alfred knows he and Ivan don't have the best of pasts together. Hell, any nation across the world can tell you that.

Alfred recalls the first time he met Ivan. It had been in a field, wide open and full of long blades of dry grass that reached their knees.

He remembers just running through the fields, now an independent nation and free of his brother's reign. He remembers the rising sun, a warm heat on the back of his neck. Alfred collapsed in the grass, his laughter ringing through the open space. He lay there for what felt like hours, admiring the sky and its clouds, making out different shapes and animals.

After a while, he noticed a nation approaching him. Countries could always tell when the other would appear, as they all had a sort of ingrained instinct to recognise them. Despite this, Alfred was easily able to notice them due to their strong aura. Instantly, Alfred had been out on edge, seeing a tall, pale man walking up to him. But, when he just sat on the ground next to him, looking up at the sky with those beautiful violet eyes, Alfred relaxed. He gave a small smile, which the other nation returned, if a bit creepily.

"So, you are the new nation, da?"

Alfred startled at their voice, but responds happily nonetheless,

"Yep! United States of America at your service! What happens to be your name, stranger?"

The other nation chuckled, the edge of their lips quirking up.

"The Russian Empire."

Alfred perked up at this, giving an excited gasp,

"Oh! You're one of the nations who responded to my declaration of independence! Dude, I cannot thank you enough for that!"

The Russian Empire seemed startled at his attitude, but slowly, he relaxed into an interested grin.

"It was nothing. Consider it a favour for a friend, da?"

Alfred was oblivious to the undertones of that sentence, instead focusing on the part where the Russian Empire deemed them

friends. He sat in silence, staring at him.

"You want to be my friend?"

Alfred asked quietly, a million watt smiles growing on his face. The Russian Empire nodded, if a bit quickly.

"Then it's official! From this day onwards, America and Russia will be the best of friends!"

Alfred cheered, throwing his hands in the air. The Russian Empire couldn't help but smile with him, copying his actions and falling with his back against the ground.

The rest of the day, they lay on the dry surface, pointing out birds and the shapes of interesting clouds until the sun set. Just a once-colony, and a lonely nation, both finding solace in the other.

But it couldn't last forever, no matter how much Alfred wished it could.

He sighed deeply.

'It was both of our faults, if I'm honest. Ivan didn't want to communicate, and I was too caught up in war to notice our failing relationship by pretending everything was fine.'

Alfred sinks to the floor, lightly tilting his head to meet the door behind him.

'*But that doesn't explain my feelings. Is it because I finally have him back after decades of loneliness?'*

Alfred ponders, but something bugs him about the idea. It's not the correct puzzle piece.

'*Honestly, with how I acted, it's almost like I was possessive.'*

Alfred startles at how accurate that was. He groans softly, embarrassed at his behaviour.

'I was never like that when I was younger. What, just because I'm older I

notice different things about my friend?'

He frowns in irritation.

'What am I missing?'

He doesn't know how long he sat there, in confusion and plain anger. Despite trying to figure out his feelings, he couldn't take his mind off of Ivan. No matter what he did, what he thought, his brain always ran back to Ivan. His patience was running thin, until eventually, it snapped.

'*UGHHH!! What is wrong with me!! So he's handsome, I love his giggles, his laughter, his violet eyes!! So what if I love him! I don't get it!'*

Alfred sighs, sagging into himself. He pauses.

'Wait.'

'...'

'LOVE??'

-

HEYOO!!! Good to see you all again! Exams are officially over!! Thank god.. anyways, after this chapter, I'm switching back to posting every second day. I hope you enjoyed the longer chapter. My sincerest apologies for leaving you on a cliffhanger, but I couldn't resist. Thank you all for 2K+ reads, holy Christ. You guys are the absolute best, I love you all so much.
Anyways, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 19: A Secret

[image]

'*LOVE??*'

-

Alfred could not believe this was happening. No, he simply could not believe it. Actually, he refuses to believe it.

'*Nope, nuh uh, I don't love him.*'

Alfred stubbornly refuses, a harsh sigh escaping him. He stands, opting to pace in circles around the hall.

'*I do not love him.*'

Alfred tries to convince himself, for sure.

It's not working.

'*Sure, I admire him. His eyes, his laugh, the way his blush highlights his features-*'

He really is trying to prove himself wrong, I promise.

'*And yeah, maybe I like the way his hugs feel-*'

Alfred is so deep in the river, I'm pretty sure the ancients waved to him on the way there.

'*And how his hand can evelope mine-*'

Honestly, I don't even know what point he's getting at anymore.

And so, Alfred continues to deny, deny, deny his feelings for Ivan. It seems like an eternity, but is really only five minutes he spends pacing and digging a deeper hole for himself.

Eventually, he throws his hands up in frustration. Alfred, at this point, has given up. His face is blood red, his ears feel as if they're on fire.

'*Shit. I really do love him, don't I?*'

Alfred finally admits it to himself, with great struggle. If he's honest, he feels quite disgusted with himself.

'Seriously, what is wrong with me? He's my best friend, and now I love him? How will I ever be able to look at him the same?'

Alfred laments, tugging a hand through his hair.

'*Im not even sure if he'll feel the same...'*

He sighs deeply. Then pauses.

'Wait, does he even like men??'

Alfred groans.

'Great, another problem in the way.'

He starts to pace again, looking at the door to his apartment with dismay. He doesn't know if he'll be able to enter the room, let alone look at Ivan now that he's aware of his feelings.

But Alfred knows no matter how hard he'll try to hide, the secret will eventually come out. Ivan's always been able to read him like a book, even more so nowadays. So he'll start simple.

By doing absolutely nothing.

Don't get him wrong, he'd love to confess. But first, he has to see their standing. See what he can get away with before he makes Ivan uncomfortable with his unnecessary touches or flirts. Alfred would hate to chase him away before he got to ki-... Before he got to confess, so he'll reel himself in.

Thankfully, Alfred knows he's quite the touchy-feely person, and Ivan is sure to know as well. But what to do?

'I'm pretty sure hand holding is fine, with an acceptable excuse. Ivan seems to like hugs, so hopefully I can just drag them on for a bit?'

Alfreds brain is starting to hurt with all of this thinking.

'Hopefully, the rest of the states will hold off threatening him for a while. This might take a while, and I don't want them putting unnecessary strain on our relationship.'

Hah. He wishes.

Alfred seems to finally calm down, taking deep breaths in and out. His face is no longer on fire, and a determined feeling has settled in his chest.

'By the end of this week, I'll know. And hopefully, he returns my feelings!'

Alfred knows he's getting cocky, hell, he knows he's getting overconfident. But he can't help it. It's his first time in love, after all. He wouldn't know the distress of rejection, as his mind only settles on the good for once.

With Ivan on his mind, Alfred never really thinks badly of matters anymore. He's too busy admiring him, wondering what they'll talk about next, or what they'll do together. He sighs as his stomach grumbles.

'That reminds me, I still have breakfast to make.'

Alfred though, turning to face the door. Taking in a deep breath, he turns the knob, and steps back inside.

-

Heyoo everyone! I'm really sorry for this short chapter, compared to the last one. I just finished training, and am dead tired lol. Anyways, this is the start of the next.. arc? I guess you could call it that. We'll be getting my report in a few days, so hopefully all goes well. With that, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Memory. 2

[image]

6 April, 1862

America let out a harsh breath, trying to keep his cool. Pinching the bridge of his nose, he ignored the sounds of chaos around him. Yet, he also couldn't keep the smile off his face.

They had won the battle of Shiloh.

Of course, victory did not come without sacrifice. They'd faced many deaths, thousands even. It had been the bloodiest they'd seen so far.

"Hey pops, what're you doing here all by your lonesome?"

America looked up, eyes meeting the tired ones of Oregon. America wrapped an arm around his son, leaning back in his chair as he sighs.

"Just wallowing in pity, as one does."

Oregon chuckled at his answer, watching his siblings celebrated around them.

"Yeah, I get it. Hey, hopefully this battle just signals that it's all downhill from here?"

Oregon raised an eyebrow in query, and America rolled his eyes. He mentally went over the amount of paperwork and battle plans he'd have to construct with the siege leaders, and sighed.

"We can only hope so, son."

"We can only hope."

-

17 September, 1862

America groaned, clutching his side and desperately trying to look through blood covered lashes. The pain was unbearable, to the point he felt he was unable to move.

*But America had to get up, to **fight** , because his children were out there. His kids, only a few years younger than him in physical age, were fighting in another war.*

Just as he had lifted himself from the dirt, another wave of agonising pain overcame him. He could hear the echoing cries of his people as they fell, each and every one.

America collapsed to the ground, blacking out from the pain. He didn't know when he awoke, but it was to panicked shouts above him.

"FATHER! FATHER, CAN YOU HEAR ME?!"

America sluggishly pried his eyes open, blinking the sand out. W. Virginia gripped his shoulders in a tight hold, tears dripping down her face. A line of blood fell from her forehead to Americas brow.

He brought up a weak hand, wiping away the red liquid on her face slowly. America gave a tired smile once he heard her suprised gasp, asking in a whisper of a voice,

"Did we win?"

W. Virginia sobbed, relief evident on her face. She grabbed him in a hug, mindful of injuries for the both of them.

"Yes, father. We won. We made it through."

America gave a happy chuckle, one that broke off into a bloody cough. W. Virginia startled, immediately standing up and calling frantically for a medic.

"I'm sorry you have to see me like this.."

America apologised, a grave look on his face. It was evident he wasn't all there, but he tried to stay awake, if only for his daughter.

"Its war, father. It's to be expected."

W. Virginia bluntly stated, yet not unkindly. Americas expression soured.

'What kind of father am I? To let my kids go to war?'

"Don't beat yourself up about it, father. We would've joined whether you allowed us or not."

America sighed. She had him there. Her pointed expression didn't help either.

"The medics should be arriving soon, you can rest so long."

He sighed deeply in relief, and goes to close his eyes. Not before America placed a hand on her shoulder (when had he dropped it?) and gave her a stern glare.

"Take care of yourself. Don't spend hours worrying over me. I'm the country, I will recover faster. ***P romise me.****"*

W . Virginia hesitated. He can see it on her face, the way her mouth twitches and her brow scrunches. She'd always been the most like him, in the way their stubbornness almost always clashed.

And, to his dismay, alike him to the point she ignored her health. Always would she put her siblings first, others above her. Never would she put herself first.

"Promise me, West Virginia. Promise me,
Emma."

She startled at the use of her human name, never having heard it in such a serious tone. Despite this, W. Virginia nodded.

America sighed in relief, and finally embraced the black dots edging his vision.

-

There are no victors in war, only survivors.

-

Heyooo everyone! Again, everything I get is off Google, so please feel free to correct me. Happy to see you all again. Also, off topic, but does anyone else get really heavy nosebleeds?? I get them once every week in summer lmao and every few weeks in winter. Which just so happened to be today. Honestly, my nose is such a sensitive little bitch. Anyways, hope you enjoyed, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 20: A Kitchen filled with Sound

[image]

Taking in a deep breath, Alfred turns the knob, and steps inside.

-

It's silent when the door creaks closed, which doesn't surprise Alfred. Ivan always made very little sound, it being one of the reasons he creeped out the other nations.

Alfred hesitantly walks down the hallway, through he tries not to let it show.

'*Damn, I am going to have a hard time hiding this. Just play it cool Alfred, you'll be fine.*'

He sighs as he enters the kitchen, pointedly ignoring the empty chair where Ivan should be. Although it worries him, he knows Ivan will hear him busy and come calling.

Slowly, Alfred prepares the kitchen, bringing out eggs and buttering the pan. Cracking open the eggs over the pan, he grabs a spatula. Once he's scrambled them, he starts to fry the bacon on a different pan. It takes a few minutes or so, but eventually Alfred manages to prepare a plate of breakfast for Ivan (and maybe some extra pieces of bacon for him).

"Hey Ivan! Come to the kitchen, I've got something for you!"

Alfred calls out, setting out two glasses of orange juice on the table. He perks up as he hears Ivan's heavy footsteps approaching, a giddy smile growing on his face.

He quickly clears his throat as Ivan enters the kitchen, tall frame blocking the light from the hallway. Alfred's gaze follows him as he

sits down, and locks eyes with him. Alfred notes his face has a slight redness to it, which wasn't there before.

"All this for me, Fredka?"

Ivan chuckles, and Alfred is entranced by the sound. Shaking himself out of it, he sits down next to him as he sips his drink.

"Anything for a friend! I can't just let you leave my house hungry, can I?"

That reminds him. Ivan will have to leave soon, if only to go back to his country for a week until the next meeting. That line of thought quickly put a damper on his mood, though he tried not to let it show.

"About that.."

Ivan hesitates, and instantly Alfred is put on guard. He places a hand on his shoulder, and when he doesn't notice any resistance, squeezes it lightly. Ivan seems to relax, while Alfred's thoughts are like that of a hurricanes.

'*Shit is everything alright? I haven't heard anything from my government about war, nor anything about Russia in particular. I hope it isn't serious.*'

"Would it be alright if I stay longer?"

Alfreds mind screeched to a halt.

'*...Huh?*'

Taking Alfred's silence as rejection, Ivan quickly hurries on to explain himself,

"My flight back has been cancelled, I just got the call. They say a storms coming in, and I won't be able to rebook for the next week."

As Alfred continues to not respond, Ivan gives a sad sigh.

"I can leave now, if you are uncomfortable-"

"NO!"

They both sit and stare at the other in shock, not expecting the outburst. Alfred clears his throat awkwardly, rubbing the back of his neck with a blush creeping up his neck.

"I'd actually like it a lot more if you stayed. Please?"

Alfred askes with an awkward smile on his face, big blue eyes wide open. The sadness leaks out of Ivan, and he chuckles softly.

"Thank you, Alfred."

'*AHHHH OH MY GOD HES STAYING IN MY HOUSE FOR LONGER FUCK YEAHHHH!!!*'

Ofcourse, Alfred kept that to himself, and schooled his voice to keep the overwhelming joy from leaking out.

"Not a problem-o dude! Can't wait to see what *mischief* we can get up to!"

Alfred giggles, leaning on Ivan's side. He tenses up, but slowly relaxed.

'*SCORE! Hes okay with this!*'

They proceed to chat for an hour or so, while Ivan finishes up breakfast. His face has a permanent blush on it, no matter how small. Alfred, being the oblivious fuck that he is, does not notice that. How he can initiate physical contact yet not notice the affect it has on said person, is just plain baffling.

Eventually, it came to an end, and Ivan stood up to put his dishes away. While he did that, Alfred pulled out his phone to check his messages.

He winces at the amount of texts on the **Tired Dad™ + 50 Small Fuckers** groupchat, and he can only sigh in annoyance.

"Are you okay, Fredka?"

Alfred startles at the voice behind him, fumbling for his phone as it drops out of his hands. Ivans hand whips out, catching and handing it to him.

Alfred stares wide eyed, amazed at those quick reflexs.

'*That was hot..*'

This American is so goddamn down bad it's making ME cringe.

"T-thanks, Ivan."

Ivan raises an eyebrow to the stuttered response, but shrugs and nods. Alfred clutches his phone as he types response after response to his children, before pocketing his phone and turning to Ivan.

"I'm gonna clean up the kitchen (again), mind if I put the radio on?"

"I don't mind."

Ivan settles back on the stool, leaning on the table as he watches Alfred clean the kitchen, occasionally humming and dancing with the beat. Eventually, a song comes on that makes both of them stop in shock.

"It takes a certain kind of man with a certain reputation,"

Both Alfred and Ivan burst into laughter, Alfred folding over clutching his stomach as he cackles. Ivan hides his face I'm his scarf, snorts escaping him.

Alfred manages to reel his laughter in, before grabbing Ivans hand and pulling him up.

"Cmon, dance with me!"

Ivan agrees with a laugh, both dancing around the kitchen as the song progresses.

"Party like a russian!"

They sing out in glee, smiles mirroring the others. Alfreds voice

overpowers Ivan's, but he can still hear it in the undertones. They continue to flit across the kitchen, laughter ringing through the house. For the duration of the song, their eyes had never left eachother, as if lost in the wide expanse of colour.

They stood, out of breath, but feeling better than they had in centuries as the song and dance-off came to a close.

"I have to admit, you were good, but I was obviously the better dancer!"

Alfred brags, dragging a hand through his now sweaty hair. Ivan chuckles, equally as warm, while rolling his eyes.

"If you say so, little American."

Alfred's nose scrunches up, eyes narrowing in a playful glare.

"Hey, what's that supposed to mean?"

Ivan just smiles, and walks away to the living room. Alfred follows him, voice increasing in volume,

"Answer me Ivan!"

"And what's with 'little american'? I am NOT little!"

"Ivaaannn!"

-

Heyooo! Exciting news, this story is #1 on the rusame tag! WTF. I literally could not believe it holy hell. Couldn't have done it without you guys <3. Thanks for 3k+ reads!!! Damn, y'all are the best frfr. Anyways, thanks for reading today's chapter, see y'all on Wednesday (my time)
Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

cats.

[image] [image]

.

Lily

Daisy.

Chapter 21: A Little Defenestration Never Hurt!

[image]

"Ivaaan!"

-

Alfred continued to whine and pout as he followed Ivan to the living room, yet Ivan wouldn't budge. He eventually gave up, and sighed loudly as he collapsed onto the couch with an unimpressed look on his face.

Ivan chuckles, sitting down next to him with a soft 'oof'. He turns his head to Alfred, a small but smug smirk growing on his face.

"Little~ Amerikan~"

Ivan taunts, his voice taking on a sing-song like note. He can't hide the amusement shining in his grin. Alfred's eyes narrow in a playful glare, pretending to seeth.

"I. Am. Not. Little."

"So very small~"

"Am. NOT!"

"Just the smallest, da?"

"That's it, COME HERE!"

Alfred yells, tackling Ivan in a hug. They let out joyous laughs as the roll around, eventually ending up on the floor. Alfred tries to slap a hand on Ivan's mouth, only for Ivan to lick him. In response, Alfred wipes his hand back on Ivans face. Ivans look of pure disgust, going crossed eyed trying to look at where he wiped, had Alfred breaking into a bigger fit of laughter.

Within a few minutes, they both tired, with Alfred on top of Ivan with his hands on either side of Ivan's head. Breathing heavily, Alfred gasped out,

"Not so tough now, are you huh?"

Ivan chuckles, if slightly choked up. Alfred notices now just how close their faces are to touching, how their breaths manage to intermingle. Alfred thinks he stops knowing how to think, how to move. He can only stare at Ivan, their eyes meeting. He gets lost in the hues, the scents, the touch. He can feel their faces leaning closer, and closer, until-

"Hey dad, who's this?"

They startle, their little bubble of non-awareness shattering instantly. Frozen, and now keenly aware just how close his **everything** is to Ivan, he slowly picks his head up and instantly deadpans.

"Seriously Hawaii? I have a door, you know."

He gives his daughter a glare, despite it not doing much due to the fire he can feel crawling up his neck. His face must be blood red. He's almost hesitant to look down and see Ivan's reaction.

If he did look down, he wouldn't be disappointed. Ivans face is just as red, if not more, and he's fully buried in his scarf. He's currently trying to ignore the very gay thoughts running through his mind, while also preferring if Alfred smothered him to death with those massive thighs.

Sorry, did I say trying to ignore his very gay thoughts? My bad, he's just terrible at it.

Hawaii gives her father an unimpressed stare, looking at their current position which, mind you, they still haven't moved from.

"Uh huh, sure. I wouldn't have taken the window if I had known you were busy doing gay sh-"

Alfred quickly scrambles off of Ivan, pointedly murmuring soft

apologies, as he slams a hand over his daughters mouth. He gives her a withering glare, and she wisely shuts her mouth.

Alfred sighs, turning around as he hears Ivan rise from the floor. The lower half of Ivan's face is still covered by his scarf, which irks Alfred, but he smiles at him nonetheless.

"Ivan, this is my daughter, Hawaii. She was the last state to be added to the union."

Alfred introduced nervously, Ivan nodding at her in acknowledgement. She gives a sly grin back, her eyes glinting something dangerous.

"So, your the one dads been raging about huh?"

Ivan looks slightly confused, muttering the word 'raging?' under his breath.

"Well, here's to hoping you don't fuck it up again. We'll be watching you, mind."

Hawaii threatens, if mildly. She still gets her point across, and Ivan nods stiffly. Her shoulders relaxing, she makes her way over to an open window. Nodding at her father, she says,

"Good to see you again dad, hope to see you again soon."

And with that, she hops out of the apartment. A beautiful act of defenestration, if I say so myself.

And thus, she leaves behind two very befuddled and confused nations, one more so than the other.

"Is she... Always like that?"

Ivan askes slowly, still staring at the windowsill that now sports shoe marks.
Alfred nods, exasperated. He drags a hand down his face, then turns to Ivan hesitantly with an apologetic look on his face.

"Hey Ivan.. I'm uh, sorry about earlier. Didn't mean to make you fall

so hard for me, heh."

It was meant as a joke, but judging by the way Ivan's face gathers a warm glow, Alfred can tell he didn't take it as such. And with the way he hides his face in his scarf for the third time that day, he can tell it won't be the last.

A spark of hope starts to smoke in his heart.

Maybe, just maybe... Alfred had a chance.

-

Heyooo! Again, short chapter, my apologies. Think I'll be sticking to 700-800 word chapters again, as it's easier on me. Anyways, I finally know how ill end this story, as mostly I've been pulling ideas out of my ass. Dw, it's not anytime soon, but I know what to do now. Anyhow, hope you enjoyed, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 22: An Outing

[image]

Maybe, just maybe, Alfred had a chance.

-

The day did not start the best. Ivan knows this.

It is barely breaching afternoon, yet so far he'd been threatened by an overprotective brother, had an emotional crisis, got trapped under Alfred, got threatened *again,* and then Alfred said he fell for him (which he took seriously).

So yes, Ivan could say he's had a stressful day.

That brings them to now, both nations awkwardly sitting on the couch while Ivan hides his red face in his scarf.

Ivan hears Alfred sigh, before shuffling next to him. On instinct, Ivan tenses, but eventually relaxes as Alfred doesn't seem to be doing anything.

"So..."

Alfred starts, and Ivan looks up from his scarf with rosy cheeks and heavily lidded eyes. When Alfred looks at him to continue speaking, he goes quiet. Once he shakes his head, he clears his throat and says,

"It seems whenever we try and spend time together here, we're always interrupted. Would you mind if we got out of the house for a bit?"

Ivan ponders his question, but sees nothing wrong with it. He shrugs, but nods nonetheless. The small upturn of lips has returned to his face, and he lowers his scarf. Alfred physically brightens, his million mega-watt smile gracing his features.

"Where do you propose we go?"

Ivan askes hesitantly, a slightly worried look on his face. Alfred places a hand on his chin in thought, but eventually nods.

"There's a pretty good picnic place just down the road."

Alfred says, his golden hair bouncing. Ivan sees an opportunity, and to hopefully recover his dignity from earliers experience, says with a sly grin,

"Sounds like Fredka is asking me on a date~"

Instantly, Alfreds face is ablaze, and he can only spitter in response. Ivan roars in laughter, the sound startling birds outside.

"I kid, I kid. Quite the red face you have there, Fredka."

Ivan chuckles, not noticing Alfred's look of relief at not being caught. In reality, he **was** thinking of it as a date, and was worried he got caught. Oh well, oblivious fucks they may be, atleast they're entertaining!

"Yeah, yeah. A date, can you imagine?"

Alfred laughs nervously, avoiding eye contact. He shakes his head, and quickly stands, pulling a suprised Ivan up with him.

"I'll go get the basket and food. There should be a blanket in your bedroom, if you could go fetch it please?"

Alfred directs, pointing towards the door. Ivan nods, and Alfred flees the living room in a hurry. Ivan raises an eyebrow to this, but shrugs and walks down the hallway.

Upon entering the bedroom and opening the long cupboard, he's struck with confusion and slight intimidation at just how many blankets there are.

"Fredka, what blanket do you want!"

Ivan calls out to Alfred, getting a 'you choose!' in response. Shaking

his head, he grabs one at random. It's fluffy, but not to the point grass will easily stick to it. (In the back of his head, he notices it's black, yellow and white, but he quickly pushes the thought away.)

Folding the blanket smaller so as to fit in the basket, he heads out of the bedroom to where Alfred is standing at the entrance of the apartment.

Ivan hands him the blanket with a smile, and in return Alfred gives him a wink. This, of course, throws Ivan completely off guard, and he just stands there stupidly as Alfred opens the door.

"Ready?"

Alfred askes, grinning. Ivan just sighs in amusement, and follows him through the door.

-

After 10 minutes or so (the place really was quite close) they managed to find an open spot, shadowed by a great willow tree with leaves gently swaying in the breeze.

As Alfred sets the blanket down, they both settle on the soft fabric contently. The sky shines orange, signaling afternoon is on the horizon.

Without realising it, Ivan had sat very close to Alfred on instinct. This gave him an idea when he looked down at their hands. Slowly, with enough time for Alfred to pull away, he entertwines them.

Alfred turns to him with a questioning look (was there a blush on his cheeks?) but sighs and turns back with a smile. Ivan continues to steal glances at him, and he's sure if Alfred had continued to look at him, he'd had seen the love-sick expression present.

But he didn't. And so, they continued to snack on sandwiches in silence, one hand holding the other as they watch they sun slowly set.

"Hey Ivan?"

"Da, Alfred?"

"...thank you for being my friend."

"Thank you for being mine."

-

Heyooo! Wow, uh, got a little bit of the feels at the end lol. Anyways, sorry, no cat picture, just a dragon I painted. What do y'all think? Any good? I'm handing it in for art society Eistedfodd, so here's to hoping it'll get accepted! Anyways, I hope you enjoyed, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 23: A French Rumour

[image]

And so, they say there, hand in hand as they watched the sun set. They looked deeply in eachothers eyes, smiling. In fact, they were so locked on the other, they just missed the flash of a camera.

-

Alfred sighed as he closed the front door behind him, stretching. Ivan walks further into the kitchen, likely placing the basket and uneaten items down. Alfred can't help but give a love-sick smile in his direction, still riding the high of the hand holding earlier.

Alfred **had** been taking Ivan on a date, even if Ivan thought he was joking. His smile fell, reality crashing down. He seemed to think it was a joke. But Alfred just shook his head.

'*No, I know I have a chance. Ivan wouldn't just let me hold his hand if I was a friend only. Stay positive.*'

Alfred walks further into the house, trying not to let his thoughts get to him. Collapsing on the couch, he switches the TV on to a random channel.

"What might you be doing?"

Alfred jumps, a hand grabbing at his heart. He whips his head to meet Ivan's smirking face, amused at his fright. He gives him an annoyed glare, although his eyes gives him away.

"Really Ivan?"

Ivan chuckles, sitting down next to Alfred. Alfred tries to ignore just how close they are, a light blush dusting his face.

"Just looking for a movie to watch?"

Alfred says, smiling nervously. Ivan nods, shuffling closer to Alfred.

Trying to not notice how he can feel the heat radiating off of the other, Alfred randomly picks a movie in his panic. And, to his luck, it just so happens to be a romance filled one.

Slowly, they settle into the movie, getting comfortable on the couch. Eventually, Alfred feels himself tiring, and desperately fights to stay awake. Alas, it was no hope, and he fell asleep buried into Ivan's side.

Just as he's about to leave the conscious realm, an arm wraps around him and pulls him further into the warmth. And as he falls further into the embrace of sleep, he swears he could almost hear the whisper of,

"*I love you."*

-

Alfred jumps awake, his snoring cut off as he hears the pinging of his phone. He grumbles, pulling out from Ivan's chest (where he had been snuggling into) and grabbing his noisy phone.

Checking what was getting him so many messages, he chokes on his spit.

"**WHAT THE FUCK?!**"

Alfred roars, outraged. Below him, Ivan sat up immediately in panic.

"Fredka?! What is the matter!?"

Ivan askes, placing a hand on Alfreds shoulder in worry. Alfred can do nothing but breathe out heavily, shoving the phone in Ivans face. He pinches the bridge of his nose as Ivan reads the message, his eye twitching.

"**What the fuck.**"

Ivan seethes, fists clenching, and Alfred can only sigh. A photo had been sent to the nations groupchat, one of them on the picnic. And it had been sent by, obviously, France.

The chat was blowing up, over 190 countries all texting at the same time. And all of them making wild accusations, yet the one that seems to be the most common is that they're dating.

In all his anger, Alfreds face still manages a blush. By god does he wish that was true. He sneaks a glance over to Ivan, still muttering obscenities under his breath.

"Ivan?"

Ivan's voice stops, and he turns his head to Alfred. He looks immensely stressed, his eyebrows creased and eyes twitching. Yet his tone softens when he asks,

"Da, Fredka?"

Alfred drops his head onto Ivan's shoulder, and Ivan tugs him into a hug almost immediately. They both sit, embracing for the comfort.

"What are we going to do?"

Alfred murmers into his neck, tightening his hold. Ivan runs a finger down his back, though he can't stop the slight shake to them.

"I don't know."

They sit in silence, arms encircling the other. Despite the seriousness of the situation, Alfred can't help but enjoy the warmth.

"We could just show them they're wrong? Fight again, like Russia and America?"

"But what if I don't want them to be wrong?"

Alfred whispers under his breath, quiet to the point he didn't even think he said it out loud. Ivan's hand freezes, and Ivan goes still in shock. Alfred, in turn, stops and his eyes snap open as he realises what he just said.

"...what?"

Ivan chokes out, sounding on the verge of tears.

'*oh shit.*'

Oh shit indeed, Alfred.

-

Heyooo! LMAOOO I can't wait to write the next chapter. Anywaysssss hope you enjoyed this one. The cats are back! I'm so sorry to leave you on this massive of a cliffhanger, but I wanted to push the confession ahead and make them *coughs* whatever but with that, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 24: A Confession

[image]

"...what?"

Ivan chokes out, sounding on the verge of tears.

'*Oh shit.*'

Oh shit indeed, Alfred.

-

"I-i mean-"

Alfred stutters, making eye contact with everything and anything **but** Ivan. He tries to draw himself away from Ivan, but his grip tightens, almost to the point where it's painful.

Alfred is panicking internally, on the verge of bursting into tears. But he stops, and takes a deep breath. Tugging his arms away from Ivan with a bit of force, he gets off the couch and stands, facing him.

Slowly, hesitantly, he takes Ivan's hands in his. It's not hard, with how still Ivan has gone, violet eyes wide, so very wide, in shock. He gulps, but there's no time for backing down. Not when there's a hopefulness in the air, fragile and thin.

Alfred let's out a sigh, before looking Ivan in the eyes. His sight is slightly blocked, golden locks framing the edges of his vision. Ocean blue and amethyst purple clash, a warring of emotions between two nations.

"Ivan."

Alfred starts, voice strong and loud. Ivan gives a shuddering breath, before giving a slow nod. An invitation, an asking of, 'please go on?'

"I have known you for decades. Centuries, even. And you've dealt with me longer than any nation has bothered to."

Ivan gives a light chuckle at that, and the tension in the room lessens. Yet the edge sharpens, like a cat waiting in anticipation.

"And these past few days, you've given me hope. That I could have a friend again. That I wouldn't be alone. But eventually, that hope turned into something else."

'*This is it. No turning back now, Alfred. Come on, you're the US of A!"*

" **I love you, Ivan."**

Silence rings through the house, and Alfred closes his eyes. Waiting for a response has never hurt this much before, yet he must be patient.

Slowly, the hands in his start to shake. Alfred startles, and he whips his head up while his eyes snap open to look at Ivan. Tears silently stream down his face, yet the largest smile he's ever seen stretches across his pale skin.

"You silly, silly man."

Ivan gives a watery chuckle, intertwining their fingers with one another. Alfred marvels at the soft skin, the pale versus tan.

"We are kindred spirits, you and I. And throughout the years, you have never shown me fear. To me, Alfred, that is more than anyone has ever bothered doing."

Slowly, ever so slowly, Ivan stands. He pulls Alfred up with him, and they embrace, chest to chest.

"No one has stolen my heart like you, Alfred."

Their breaths start to mingle.

"**I love you too.**"

And their lips connect.

Alfred brings a hand up to cup Ivan's cheek, sighing into the kiss. Ivan pulls him close, closer than he thought they could ever be.

Ivan's lips are rough, slightly cracked. Alfred runs his tongue over it, and he can feel Ivan shiver. In return, Ivan grabs Alfred ahoge, which makes Alfred gasp. This gives the opportunity for Ivan too kiss him deeper, taking his breath away.

Alfred's heart feels as if it's about to burst out of his chest as they disconnect, heaving for breath. Alfred looks at Ivan, love-sick eyes boring into his violet ones. Ivan's gaze soften, and they both lean their foreheads against the other as they calm.

Alfred's ocean blue eyes seem to shine, the smile gracing his face never leaving. Ivan, similarly, has a small grin that hasn't left, yet the rosey blush adorning his cheeks makes up for it.

"Well, what now, my darling?"

Alfred purrs, with a joking, but soft tone. Ivan stutters, but can only sigh in fond exasperation at the pet name.

"Whatever comes next, Sunflower."

Ivan whispers softly, and '*oh'* Alfred loves this man so much it hurts. Alfred smiles, then buries his head in Ivan's neck, careful of the hidden bandages. Ivan's eyes soften, and his hands rest on the small of Alfred's back. Alfred's arms hang over his shoulders, clutching at the soft fabric of his scarf.

They breathe in the other, content to stay in the others arms. Now that the confession was out in the air, it feels as if something has changed. Their relationship will never be the same, yes, but a certain wariness has completely vanished. Now, it feels as if a breath of fresh air has entered their lungs, and breathing around the other had become ten times easier.

Now, it doesn't matter what problems arise. As long as they're together, loved by the other, nothing will phase them.

For Russia and America might hate eachother, but Alfred and Ivan will love until the world burns anew.

-

Heyooo. Wow, first time writing a love confession. Any good? I hope so. It was short, my apologies, I just didn't want to drag it on. God knows how much I hate doing that lmao. Anyways, I hope you've enjoyed. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 25: A State Intervention

[image]

For Russia and America might hate eachother, but Alfred and Ivan will love until the world burns anew.

-

Delaware sighed, rubbing the bridge of her nose irritability. Pure pandomonian raged across the meeting room, screaming and yelling echoing through the hall.

They'd all been called here by Texas, although they don't know why. Delaware glanced at the meeting door while waiting for him to arrive.

Few minutes pass, and the door is suddenly slammed open, quieting the once rowdy room. A silence encompasses them, watching as Texas stalks to the podium where they present their ideas.

All 50 of them sit at a round table, going from oldest to youngest. Most have left their teens in physical age, more similar to that of a 19 year old. Compared to their father, who looks similar to that of a 20-21 year old.

Slamming his hands on the podium, Texas practically growls out,

"Russia is trying to befriend Pa again."

Instantly, chaos erupts. Screams of disbelief, muttered threats, unfriendly gestures and shocked looks are passed around the room.

Delaware hesitantly looks to the back where Alaska is seated. Contrary to popular belief, he doesn't hate Russia. Although, given by the dark aura surrounding him and the unnervingly blank face, that belief might just be rectified very, **very** soon.

Seeing as no progress is being made within the noise, Delaware groans, but stands and roars,

"SILENCE."

Silence overtakes them once more, yet an anger and uneasiness lingers. Turning to Texas, who stands still with his arms crossed over his broad chest, Delaware asks,

"Are you sure of this, Texas? How do you know it's not fake?"

Texas just shakes his head, as if in disappointment.

"Because Pa told me. Russia was **in Pa's** house."

The darkening aura that everyone has been pointedly ignoring increases by tenfold, and Hawaii has to yank Alaska down by his jacket and back into his seat.

"Sit. He still has more to say."

His normally carefree, but now stoic, sister whispers with a glare that could melt ice. Alaska grimaces, but tries to reign in his anger.

Seeing that that was now dealt with, Delaware tiredly (but also with a hint of anger) gestures for Texas to explain.

"Apparently, they made a deal. Russia somehow found out about us, and in turn, made Pa become his friend so that he won't say anything to **anyone.**"

"Even to his government?"

Iowa pipes up, confusion and suspicion evident on his face. Texas gives a reluctant nod.

"Even to his government."

Multiple states murmur in disbelief, some panicked looks being thrown to others.

"I call bullshit."

Pennsylvania pipes up as she rises from her chair, fire in her eyes. New Hampshire nods in agreement, Connecticut placing a hand on his shoulder as he stands next to his brother.

Just as it seems fights are going to start breaking out again, Hawaii clears her throat.

All attention goes to her as she walks up to the podium, standing next to Texas.

"I also managed to visit dad, a day or so after Texas did."

Delaware's eyes widen, and before she can even say a word, Oregon beats her to it.

"Was he alright? Russia didn't do anything to him, did he?"

He asks, his panicked tone not going unnoticed.

Hawaii gives him an unbothered look, calming his nerves slightly. Her next words cause the complete opposite.

"Nah, he didn't hurt him. I mean, I kinda interrupted them about to kiss, but it was nothing really."

"***WHAT?!***"

For almost the 6th time that day, chaos reigned upon that meeting room. 49 Voices shout out in unison, shock, disbelief, and hatred spreading quickly throughout the states.

Half of the room seems unconvinced that they were dating, (as what else could nearing a kiss mean?) While the other half thought that they were, indeed, dating and wanted to leave immediately if only to threaten Russia into treating Alfred properly.

"Uhhh, guys?"

Alabama asks quietly. His question is ignored as his siblings continue to plan murder.

"Guys!"

He asks loudly, now a bit agitated. Arkansas looks at him questionly, the only one to notice him.

"STATES OF AMERICA!"

Alabama finally roars with annoyance, everyone turning to him with surprise. He sighs, before holding up his phone.

"You might want to check the country's group chat. Specifically, the pinned photo."

There's a minute silence as the rustling of coats and bags is heard, the tapping of passwords on a screen and a collective entering of apps.

It's quiet.

"Oh my god. He really **is** dating Russia."

W. Virginia says, her mouth wide open.

A tense silence descends.

"We're killing him. Objections?"

"None."

"Just what I like to hear."

-

Heyooo! Huh, kinda short but oh well. My apologies if you were expecting more of Alfred and Ivan, I promise to give them more screen time in the next chapter!! That being said,I've posted something on conversations on my profile, just a little get to know me. Check it out, if you'd like. Anyways, hope you've enjoyed. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 26: A Fathers Plight

[image]

"We're killing him. Objections?"

"None."

"Just what I like to hear."

-

Arthur sighed as he placed his phone down on the table, contemplating whether or not he'd gone insane.

It had been an average day. He woke up, drank some tea, read the news. Ate lunch, paperwork, then drank some more tea.

Eventually, he had picked up his phone, irritated by the amount of loud 'pings!' disturbing his quiet time. When he finally opened the source of the noise and laid his eyes upon the picture posted, he spat out his tea in shock.

So now here he sat, head in his hands, rooibos down his shirt and wondering where, excatly, he went wrong.

It's not to say he wasn't happy for Alfred. He was! It's just... He's **really** questioning Alfred's taste in men. It's no secret that Russia scares the absolute fuck out of Arthur. So to see his son, the personification of the United States of America, hold hands on a date with Russia?

It unsettled him.

But not so much as it frustrated him.

Despite not wanting to, Arthur remembers the revolution. And he could recall just how close they were during that time period. Thus, when he saw the photo, his first thought wasn't to deny its truth.

Instead, his first thought was,

'*How in the hell am I supposed to shovel talk **Russia** of all nations??'*

-

"Vanya?"

Alfred asks, slowly opening his eyes to peer up at Ivan. They now lay on the couch, Alfred resting on Ivan's chest. He marveled silently at it's softness, and Alfred could tell by his red face he didn't mind.

"Da, my Sunflower?"

Ivan replies, an eyebrow raised. Both were content to stay in each others arms, lazing about in the post confession bliss. Alas, things had to be done.

"You do know my children are on that groupchat? Just hidden?"

Alfred giggles childishly at the look of confusion on Ivan's face. After a few minutes, he sees understanding dawn on him. He goes a few shades paler too, but who's to say that wasn't a trick of the light?

"Oh."

Alfred full on laughs at this, and Ivan groans as he playfully pushes his face away from him.

"Do not laugh at me. Not only do I have to deal with 50 plus murderous children coming after me, I also have to deal with your brother. I am in peril, I say. PERIL, Fredka!"

Alfred just continues to wheeze, leaning his head on Ivan's shoulder as he shakes in laughter. Ivan sighs, but can't help it and places a tentative kiss on Alfred's forehead. Alfreds chuckles have calmed down now, and he just hums into Ivans chest.

They lay in silence for a few minutes longer, enjoying the warmth.

"Mattie isn't really that bad you know."

"Da. And I wasn't threatened to have a hockey stick shoved up my-"

"Okay okay! He.. might be **slightly** unhinged."

"That's an understatement."

"Very unhinged?"

"When it comes to you."

"Like you, Vanya?"

A fond sigh.

"Very much so, darling."

Alfred chuckles lightly, a soft blush on his face. He still wasn't used to all the loving nicknames, but they were slowly growing on him.

Suddenly, he lets out a groan. Ivan eyes him with concern as he basically tries to suffocate himself in his chest.

"Something wrong?"

"I'm going to have to do **so** much paperwork when keeping you away from the states."

Alfred mutters, voice muffled from the fabric of his Ivan's shirt. In response, Ivan hesitantly asks,

"Why is that, exactly?"

Alfred drags his head up, giving Ivan a deadpanned look.

"Half of my work is caused by them blowing up buildings, lighting each other on fire, fist fighting politicians and throwing people out of windows. Can you imagine what they'll do if they get a hold of you?"

Ivan's silence speaks volumes.

"Yep. My awesome heroicness will not be enough to save you from their wrath, I'm afraid."

Ivan groans, and Alfred gives an uplifting smile.

"Hey, it's not all that bad. We've still got a few days until the next meeting, and the states have theirs pretty soon, so they'll be pretty busy."

Ivan can hear the excitement in Alfred's voice, and he can feel himself start to grin at the infectious energy.

"Which means?"

"I'm taking you out on a date!"

-

In a building many miles away, a pale lady grips her phone with a frighteningly tight hold, eventually cracking the screen. The broken pieces fall to the floor, clattering in the silence.

She grits her teeth as she seethes, rage boiling off of her in waves. Her screams of pure, unfiltered anger is heard all across Europe.

-

Heyyoo. Bit earlier post than usual, I've got a busy day tmr. My friends coming over for a sleepover!! Honestly I can't wait to skinder with her about stuff. Yoh it's been awhile. Anyways, that's it for now. Hope you enjoyed! Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 27: A Sisters Anger

[image]

In a building many miles away, a pale lady grips her phone with a frighteningly tight hold, eventually cracking the screen. The broken pieces fall to the floor, clattering in the silence.

She grits her teeth as she seethes, rage boiling off of her in waves. Her screams of pure, unfiltered anger is heard all across Europe.

-

Tick.

Tock.

Tick.

Tock.

Tick.

Toc-

The sound of the clock is cut off as a knife is thrown into its core, falling to the floor in pieces.

The room lapses into silence.

After what seems like an eternity, footsteps start to pace through the room. The quiet taps of heels on wood echoes.

Belarus's fists are clenched, nails digging into the palm of her hand. She stops her pacing to look over at a board, with pins and pictures with red string all directed to one person.

America.

Belarus snarls furiously, chucking another dagger at the picture and

nailing him right between his eyes on that disgustingly happy face.

Stalking up to the picture, she rips it off of the board, tearing it down the middle.

The torn pieces float gently to the floor.

Belarus watches it fall with a distant taste of disgust, turning around quick enough her hair whips back into her face.

'*America DARES?*'

She slams her hands into a desk, swiping her hands across it and scattering paper everywhere.

'*Big brothers love is mine. MINE! He will NOT take him from me again.*'

Glancing over to the picture of them on the wall, Belarus and Ukraine on either side of Russia, Belarus has only one thought as she starts to plan.

'*Not if I have anything to say about it.*'

-

Ukraine sighed gently, sitting on the couch with a huff. She eyed the swirling snow outside with distaste, switching on the TV if only for background noise.

She had quite the amount of things to think about, after all.

'*So, brother Russia is dating America.*'

Ukraine pondered with a hand on her chin. In all honesty, it hadn't come as a surprise to her. She'd seen the looks they'd sent eachother when they first met.

'*Im surprised it took them this long. I thought the constant fighting was just foreplay, if a bit violent. They look like they'd be into it.*'

She thought, with no embarrassment evident. Ukraine smiled, fixing her headband idlely.

'*Oh well, I'm glad they finally found each other again.*'

Ukraine hummed, the smile slowly turning into a frown.

'*That does not compensate for the fact he has not messaged or told me.*'

With a scowl unusual to her pretty face, she grumbles under her breath,

"He's going to get a talking to once he returns home."

She pauses. Then grimaces.

'*I forgot about what Belarus might do.*'

'*...*'

*'Correction, what she **will** do.'*

Ukraine places her hands in her lap, fiddling with the fabric of her skirt in thought. She shrugs, but determination lights a fire in her eyes.

*'I **refuse** to let her ruin this one good thing for him.'*

She nods, a smile gracing her features once again. She stands, and starts to walk down the hall. Ukraine pauses, then winces as she hears destruction reign in one of the vacant offices.

Ukraine backs away slowly.

'*I shall try to prevent her from doing something... later, when she's calmed down.*'

-

Heyooo. Sorry, it's really short, writers block is hitting me like a truck. My duolingos also getting on my ass, and I have to head to bed soon. I hope you all enjoyed, and I'll have a longer one ready next time to make up for it. Hope you enjoyed, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Fourth of July

[image]

"Cmon, Ivan! It's about to start!"

Alfred's joyful shout echoes throughout the house as he closes the door. Ivan chuckles, slipping on his scarf before calling back,

"In a moment, Fredka!"

He can hear Alfred grumbling about how long he's taking, but he can almost see the grin on his face from here. On his way out of the house, he grabs a bouquet of sunflowers, with a red, white and blue wrapping.

He shuts the door silently, watching as Alfred has his back turned to him. He taps him on the shoulder, giving Alfred a start.

"Jesus! Don't scare me like that, Vanya."

Alfred admonishes, though he can't help the smile creeping up his face. Ivan scoffs, before taking his hand away from his back and handing Alfred the flowers.

"Oh, Ivan. They're beautiful.."

Alfred coos, in awe of the present. Ivan thanks him, pressing a quick kiss to his lips. Of course, before they can do anything further, they hear the states shout from outside.

"It's starting! Come, let's go!"

Ivan hurries, quickly picking Alfred up into a bridal carry. Alfred gives a shout of surprise, not able to stop the raging blush on his face as he hides his head in the flowers.

Eventually, they make it outside. When Ivan sets Alfred back down, they both begin to walk to the hillside where the fireworks will

begin.

They meet many states on the way there, Alfred hugging and greeting every one of them, while thanking them for the birthday wishes.

It begins to look quite strange, with 50 teens following behind two adults all dressed in a multitude of red, white and blue themed clothing. Although today, no one paid it any mind, as they all were doing the exact same thing.

Settling down on blankets, and watching the darkening sky, Alfred leans his head on Ivan's shoulder as they hold hands.

"Sunflower?"

The sound is hissing is heard over the cheers of all the Americans present, human or not.

"Ivan?"

The stars are able to be seen now.

"Happy birthday."

Their embrace is illuminated by the vibrant sky, cheers and screams of joy as the fireworks explode behind them.

-

Happy fourth of July, everyone.

Chapter 28: A Night Out (1)

[image]

"I'm taking you on a date!"

-

Ivan chuckles, amused by Alfred's enthusiasm. Though, he raises an eyebrow as he asks a question,

"Fredka, you **do** realise I do not have anything fancy to wear?"

Alfred thinks this over, giving a shrug. He sits up properly, edging off of Ivan to give him room on the couch.

"Eh, no big deal. Just go in whatevers comfortable!"

Ivan deadpans.

"You don't have anything either, do you?"

"..."

"Yeah."

Ivan sighs and cant help but smirk.

"Guess we'll have to go shopping, then."

Alfred's eyes widen, and he slowly starts to back away. Ivan notices this, and quickly grabs his wrist. Alfred increases his struggles, and they both begin a game of tug-of-war.

"No."

"Da.

"**No.**"

"**Da.**"

-

"I can't believe you dragged me into this."

Alfred grumbles under his breath, arms crossed over his chest. Ivan just hums, browsing through the suit options with a critical eye.

"Here."

Alfred startles as a suit is dropped in his hands, scrambling for purchase. Ivan gives him one last glance, smiling at his dumbfounded look. Alfred huffs, but smiles back.

"Try it on, Fredka. Tell me what you think."

Alfred raises an eyebrow, but heads into the changing room nonetheless. Slipping the suit on in the mirror, he can't help but admire himself.

Sleek, yet not too out there. It's a dark navy, with a white undershirt and black tie. Turning sideways, his face practically splits in half. He's gonna have fun teasing Ivan tonight.

-

Ivan glances at his mirror image, happy with what he sees. A light purple suit, similar in style to that of Alfred's.

'*Speaking of Alfred...'*

He wonders what the suit looks like on him. Ivan carefully folds his suit up, placing it back into the plastic. He exits the changing room, stopping in surprise. It seems Alfred made it out before him.

"Fredka? Was everything alright? Did it fit fine?"

Alfred just gives him a sly smirk in response, which, sets off alarm bells at the back of his mind. Of course, Ivan is a freak, so this just sends a blush spreading across his face.

Ivan clears his throat,trying to seem unbothered by the feelings that smirk sent him spiralling into.

"We should.. head to the checkout. Hand it over?"

Ivan sticks his arm out. Alfred eyes it, confused. Ivan stares at him.

"What are you waiting for?"

"I thought **I** was paying."

"No?"

"Well why not!?"

Alfred states, annoyance clear in his tone of voice. His eyes narrow, glaring at Ivan. Ivan sighs, but replies softly,

"Think of it as a thank you, for all you've done."

Alfred seems startled, as his mouth hangs open. Slowly, he looks off to the side, lips turning down.

"That... I'm sorry for overreacting, Vanya. I'm not exactly used to people that **aren't** my brother doing things for me out of the goodness in their heart."

Alfred apologises, wincing. He's not exactly used to **apologising** either. Especially not to Ivan, of all people.

Ivan accepts the apology with a nod, taking the suit out of Alfred's hand. They head to the checkout together, and Alfred cautiously links their arms together. Ivan glances over, slightly surprised. Alfred just looks at him with a small smile.

Ivan returns that smile tenfold.

-

"You ready, Vanya?"

Ivan glances up from where he'd been tying his laces, quickly checking the time. He curses in Russian under his breath, before standing and walking to the bedside table.

He hesitates, but snatches a small, crocheted sunflower he'd made.

It was one of his projects, originally part of a bouquet. He forgot how it even ended up in his luggage, let alone how it was still intact.

He draws in a deep breath, calling back out to Alfred,

"In a minute, Fredka."

"Okie dokie. I'll be waiting for you in the living room!"

Ivan can hear Alfreds retreating footsteps, and he waits until he's out of reach. Checking himself one last time in the mirror, flattening his hair, moving his scarf, he decides he's ready.

The door to the guest bedroom creaks open, and he starts down the hallway to where Alfred is waiting.

"Fredka?"

Alfred's back is turned to him. Of course, once he hears him, he turns to face Ivan and '*oh.*'

"*You're beautiful...*"

Everything about him is. That golden hair, shining in the light. Those baby blues, focused purely on him. His Rosey cheeks, with the blush slowly spreading. His tan skin, contrasting Ivan's pale tone.

He doesn't realise he's said it out loud until Alfred chuckles, face red from embarrassment. Ivan blanches.

"I-i-"

"It's fine, Vanya. For the record, I think you're very handsome too!"

Alfred smiles, eyes softening. Ivans face reddens in response, a Rosey blush adorning his pale cheeks. Regardless, he steps forward, gesturing for Alfred to hold his hands out.

Alfred gives him a questioning look, but shrugs and does as he says. Ivan places the crocheted flower down, curling Alfred's hands

around it.

Alfred glances down, surprised and touched once he gets a good look at it. He grins, placing it on the side of his hair with a small pin.

"Thanks, Ivan. Really completes the look!"

'*It sure does, my Sunflower.*'

Ivan thought. Alfred grabs Ivan's hand and starts to drag him to the door, excited beyond belief.

Ivan sighs fondly, and follows him through the door.

-

Heyoo. Splitting this into two chapters, as I'm very tired rn. School starts soon, and then all hell is gonna break loose. Fear not, my upload schedule will remain every second day. Anyways, hope you enjoyed. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 29: A Night Out (2)

[image]

Ivan sighs fondly, and follows him through the door.

-

Night had fallen by the time they'd gotten dressed. As they make their way down the road in Alfred's car, Alfred ponders what he'll eat when he gets there.

The dark city lights cast a shadow over the road, yet it doesn't matter much. Alfred gives a sly glance over to his boyfriend (and who'd've thought! Russia, his boyfriend!) winking when Ivan catches his eye.

He giggles childishly at the pink blush, keeping his eyes on the road. He taps his fingers on the steering wheel, humming a tune under his breath.

Traffic wasn't as bad as Alfred thought it would be, managing to get to the place within 20 minutes or so. He perks the car near the entrance, watching for any passing vehicles. Once they finally stop, he clicks the unlock button and gesture for Ivan to wait. Ivan glances at him, confused, but does as he says.

Alfred steps out, quickly running around to Ivans side of the car, like an overeager child. He opens the door dramatically, adding a little bow to the end.

"My Good Sir."

Ivan chuckles as he exits the car, taking the offered hand to stand.

"What a lovely welcoming gift from staff. Do give them my compliments."

Ivan decides to play along, Alfred's grin brightening as he does so. But, alas, as Alfred tries to stand from his half bow, he somehow

manages to bang his head on the door.

"SHIT!-"

Ivan bursts out laughing as Alfred sits on the curb, rubbing his aching helm. He's on the point of wheezing when Alfred finally looks at him with an embarrassed smile, an annoyed twitch in his playful glare.

"Let's just.. choose to ignore this, please?"

Alfred mumbles, still pressing a hand against his forehead. Ivan scoffs, but agrees with a smile. He pulls Alfred up by the arm, dusting off his suit. And if that hand just so happened to brush a bit too close to Alfred's **lower** back, well.. that's between you and me.

Alfred gives a kiss to Ivans cheek in thanks, turning around and starting to walk towards the restaurant. Ivan stares, before shaking his head and catching up with him.

They walk inside, arm in arm, quite the sight to the other restaurant goers. It isn't everyday you see two young men over six foot holding hands, after all.

Alfred doesn't particularly care, though he can tell Ivan is slightly uncomfortable by the attention.

'*Thankfully, we'll be sitting secluded from everyone else.*'

Alfred thought, and tugs Ivan away from the entrance. Ivan grips his hand tightly, the only sign he's nervous. Alfred smiles softly at him, lowering his guard. He can see it in the way his mouth tilts upwards, the hold loosening.

Alfred leads him to their table, a quaint spot near the balcony overlooking a shining blue lake. A willow tree sways directly over them, the warm light from the restaurant casting small shadows around them.

As they seat themselves and order, Ivan decides to break the comfortable silence.

"So, tell me Fredka, what is your favourite colour?"

Quiet.

"That's one way to start a conversation!"

Alfred laughs, startled by the sudden question. Ivan grumbles halfheartedly, a smile growing on his face. He goes to answer him when Alfred speaks up,

"Blue. But, more sky blue than any other. Mostly 'cus I just like flying and the freedom it gives me, yknow?"

Ivan sighs fondly at his response. Somehow, he expected that. Alfred then looks over to Ivan, raising an eyebrow. Ivan gets the hint, a childish giggle erupting.

"I would say mine is gold."

He makes no further elaboration.

"Cool. Say, do you still have your old Empire uniform?"

Alfred questions, out of the blue. While Ivan thinks back, he calls over a waiter and politely asks for some wine. The waiter nods, speeding off into the restaurant.

"...I think I do, Da. Why are you asking?"

Ivan asks with a furrowed brow and a sceptical look. Alfred just waves offhandedly.

"Nah, I was just thinking back to the old times. Y'know, when we first met? God, it's been awhile."

Alfred smiles, teeth blindingly white and so full of happiness. Alfred can see Ivan grinning along with him on instinct, and isn't surprised to find himself letting it happen. It'd been far too long since Ivan had been happy, after all.

"Da, how many years have we known each other now, Fredka? 300?"

Ivan says, a soft smile gracing his pale features. There's a slight pink tint to both of their faces, yet they're nowhere near drunk. It's just the effect they have on the other.

Alfred nods, sipping his drink which had finally arrived.

"Bit longer than that, it feels sometimes."

Their food finally arrives, and Alfred falls into silence, Ivan following. They both engage in idle chat from then on, talking about everything and anything that comes to mind. Alfred talks about his brother, how he wishes people would notice him more. Ivan speaks about his sisters, how despite missing them, he's glad to have a break from them.

After a certain amount of time, their topic falls onto the next meeting on Sunday, a day away.

"Do you think we should tell them?"

Ivan seems to ponder this, deep in thought. In all honesty, it'd been plaguing Alfred the whole day and what they should do. Deny it, and threaten their relationship with how they have to act, or tell the truth, then deal with the downfall of all the nations questions and judgement.

"Da."

Alfred startles at his blunt statement.

"Really? Just like that?"

"Mhm."

"Why?"

"If telling the nations let's me keep my boyfriend closer to me at meetings, I shall tell them hundreds of times each meeting."

Ivan has a sly grin on his face, and although Alfred can hear the seriousness in his tone, it doesn't stop his face from exploding in red.

"I- uh, I mean. Yeah, that makes sense-"

Alfred stutters, looking anywhere but Ivan. Ivan chuckles, leaning over the table and whispering,

"It'll let me show everyone there that you belong to me. I'm sure they won't mind if I devour you on that meeting table, hm?"

His sultry tone activates a part of Alfred's brain that he'd prefer to ignore. He doesn't even grace Ivan with a response, instead hiding his bright red face in his hands. If you concentrate, I'm sure you could see steam coming from his ears.

'*that was hot that was hot that was so fucking hot what is wrong with me-'*

Alfred continues to regret his existence, trying desperately to not listen to Ivans increasingly more dirty flirts.

'*What am I gonna do with him?'*

Alfred can only groan.

-

Heyooo. Yes, I'm back. I'll try to stick to every second day again, but we'll see how this goes. Last week was rough, holy hell. Thank you all for being so understanding of my break, god was it needed. I apologise for the wait, and hope you've enjoyed. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

A/N Hey.

Hey. So, I know I said I would keep to my posting schedule, but I'm going to be honest, stress is really getting to me.

That's not to say I'm the only one dealing with stress, but I think I'm the only one who hasn't stopped or taken a break. This is also project term, with about 8 plus subjects, you can see how it piles up.

I had to deal with two of my friends attempting suicide, and that really affects you, no matter how close you are to them.

I'm sorry to those who expected a chapter yesterday, or today. You have my deepest, sincerest apologies.

This story will be continued. 2 weeks maximum, and I promise I'll be back.

Thank you all so much for the support, comments, votes and reads you've given so far. Really, you are the ones getting me through high school.

Again, I'm so sorry.

-JakkalsTrou

Chapter 30: A Night Out (3)

[image]

'What am I gonna do with him?'

Alfred can only groan.

-

"Do we have eyes on the targets?"

"Copy."

"Move in?"

"Negative. Stay put."

"Still don't get why we can't outright kill the fucker!"

"Calm yourself Iowa, we don't want the Comms getting too loud. You know Fathers hearing is sensitive."

"Yeah yeah, whatever."

"I say we kidnap him when Dad goes to the bathroom!"

"Too noticeable, Pa'll immediately think it was a terrorist organisation."

"We ain't no terrorists!"

"..might as well be-"

"FUCK YOU SAY TO ME WISCONSIN?!"

"I WAS SAYING YOU'RE A LITTLE BITCH THAT'S WHAT!"

"Why I oughta.."

"I'm just saying, Ohio, if you loved me you'd let me get the first

backhand!"

"And **I'm** saying that he's gonna be hung by his hair when we get a hold of him. You can do that later with his dead body!"

"Man, you're no fun."

"Can someone help braid my hair? This wind is messing it up."

"Sure."

"Thanks Alaska."

"LETS CRUCIFY HIM!"

"CHOP HIS NUTS OFF!"

"GIVE HIM THE COPPER BULL SPECIALTY!"

"ENOUGH."

Conneticuts voice cuts through their arguments, silencing the communication device. Delaware sighs in relief, sending a thankful glance to her brother. He sends her a thumbs up, then returns to the shadows.

Currently, every single state is stationed inside, outside, in the surrounding area or the ceiling of the restaurant. How they found out? I don't know. But the one thing I do is that you don't mess with a single fathers parent. **Especially** if you are dating said parent.

"Hawaii, do you have ears on them? What excatly is happening?"

Delaware asks, if a bit anxiously. She doesn't want to let it show, but this really has stressed her just as much as the rest of the states.

"Russia is currently hardcore flirting with Dad. Oh, and some sexual innuendos too. Damn, he is going full force with this. I haven't seen Dad's face this red since we brought a wendigo home thinking it was a dog."

Hawaii rambles on, a distant expression on her face, as if

reminiscing on better times.

The silence over the comm speaks for itself. Every state has to breath in deeply, if only to keep their temper. If one looses it now, all of them follow.

New Hampshires voice echoes over,

"And Pops isn't uncomfortable with it? I've got eyes on him, but can't excatly see from this point. Having glasses doesn't help."

Delaware winces, moving closer towards the window to get a better look. She glances over to her father, looking down. Despite the increasing redness in his face, his smile is as bright as ever. In fact, she can tell he's trying to smother it with how large it's growing.

A soft grin forms on her face.

"On the contrary, he looks to be enjoying it."

Immediately, she hears the outrage of her siblings over the comm, and just decides to take it out of her ear. Edging closer, she observes her father and Russia for a few minutes more.

They'd finished their food by the time she put it back in her ear, and she had a lot to say.

"Everyone."

She waits for the accusations to quiet, grumbling as they watch their father like a hawk while waiting for her answer.

"I think we should leave them."

Before they can say anything, she cuts them off,

"Just look at them. Look at how happy Father is. When was the last time he was like this, except when with us?"

She can see everyone look away, no matter how far. They know she's right, but don't like to admit it.

"But how will we know if he's good enough? What if he's just waiting to break Dad's heart again?"

Pennsylvania pipes up, breaking the heavy atmosphere.

"Oh I'm just saying we don't kill him. I'm not saying we can't cause bodily harm and threaten him before he does so."

Delaware casually responds. They can practically hear the grin in her voice. As one, all the states turn to the direction of Russia, and sharp grins mirror the others.

-

Ivan shivers, a trickle of fear crawling up his spine. Alfred rambles on, not noticing Ivan's tensed state.

'*What was that?'*

He feels as if they're being watched. No, not Alfred.

Just him.

-

Heyoo. Shorter chapter, mb, but it's whatever. Don't you hate it when Gees (cheer, spirit) days are compulsory? On Saturday, we have to go to school (IN UNIFORM) and cheer for our sports teams. And the worst thing? ITS RAINING. IT HAS BEEN PISSING DOWN, FOR **TWO WEEKS STRAIGHT.** Many articles of school clothing has been wet, sadly. Anyways, hops you've enjoyed. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

DIE HUIS JULLE HET MY HUIS GEBRANT

[image]

Toe Alfred kyk na sy huis, gee hy 'n groot sug. Wat in die wêreld.

Die vuur, wat baie klein was aan die begin van die braai, nou het sy huis geomring.

"Môre papa!"

Alfred kyk na die deur.

"Lekker dag vanaand, ja?"

Sê Kalifornië, a groot glimlag op haar gesig. Sy draai terug na die huis, 'n wilde skynsel in haar oë.

Ivan hardloop vinnig by hom, veertig kinders op sy stert.

"ALFREEDDD!! HULP MY ASSEBLIEF MY LIEFIE!" Skree hy.

Alfred ignoreer hom en bel sy broer.

"Kanada? Waar is jy?"

"Met Nederland. Hoekom?"

"Die kinders het my huis weer aan die brand gesteek het."

"Rerig?"

"Jip."

"Damn."

"Is dit al jy sal sê?"

"Mhm."

"Okei."

Alfred hang op, as hy boetie sal nie hulp met hom nie. He kyk na Ivan en wat die kinders het met hom gedoen.

Ivan sit vasgebind op die vloer by die vuur, vasgebind aan 'n stok. Alfred gluur na sy kinders, en lê by Ivan.

"Sal jy nie vir my hulp nie?"

"Nee. Dis jou probleem, nie myne nie."

"Maar liefie!"

"Nee. Die kinders doen wat die kinders sal doen."

Alfred giggel as hy sien die kinders begin hom van die grond af lig en 'n liedjie sing as hulle dit doen. Hy het voortgegaan om daar te lê as Ivan skree so hard in die agtergrond terwyl Florida vir hom 'n malvalekker gee.

"Dankie, my seun."

"Geen probleem, papa."

Wat 'n lekker dag vanaand, sê jy nie?

-

LMAOO. Afrikaans is nie my eerste taal nie, so enige Afrikanervolk vat kan my hulp om dit te skryf, ASSEBLIEF, MY LIEF! Lol, maar genoeg is genoeg. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 31: A Night Out (4)

[image]

Ivan shivers, a trickle of fear crawling up his spine. Alfred rambles on, not noticing Ivan's tensed state.

'*What was that*?'

He feels as if they're being watched. No, not Alfred.

Just him.

-

Even after they had eaten, drunk their fill and enjoyed their time at the restaurant, Ivan couldn't shake the feeling of being **watched.**

He tries to ignore it, and frankly he thinks he's doing quite a good job at it. He managed to successfully keep the discomfort off of his face for the rest of the night, relaxing slightly in the presence of Alfred.

Somehow, someway, Ivan managed to get away with the amount of flirting he was doing. He was, in all honesty, very proud of himself. Had he said anything like that, even in the company of others, Ivan's sure he would have been given disgusted or even feared looks.

'*Nothing I'm not used to.'*

Ivan grumbles, only half-heartedly listening to Alfred's happy rambles. Despite that, he can't help the smile still present on his face. Alfred just has that effect on him, after all.

"Hey, Vanya, is everything okay?"

He's brought out of his thoughts by a gentle voice, a hand cupping his chin while deep blue eyes gaze into his.

"Apologies, I got distracted. Shall we head home, Fredka?"

The uneasy feeling intensifies, but it's overshadowed by the warm feeling that gathered in his chest when Alfred made no move to correct him. He had been starting to refer to his apartment as home, and it seems like Alfred agreed with him.

"Sure, it's getting late anyways."

Alfred says, grabbing Ivan's hand in his. Ivan brightens, his lips upturning. He stays in a happy mood, focusing on Alfred and Alfred only. He doesn't even notice when they pay, and make their way to the car.

Just as they're about to get in (and Ivan finally snapped out of his boyfriend admiring trance) Alfred stops. Ivan raises an eyebrow, and is about to question him when his breath is stolen by a deep kiss.

When he's finally released, his lungs are screaming for air and his face feels as if it's on fire.

"What was that, Sunflower?"

Ivan pants, pulling up his scarf to cover his baffled, love-sick expression. Even though he's the taller one, he can't help but feel quite small in this situation.

Alfred just smiles, and pulls him into a hug. Ivan accepts it, and they melt into each other.

-

"Man, I'm stuffed! That was a lot of fun, don't you think?"

Alfred stretches, Ivan watching with a keen eye. The white of his undershirt is tight enough to hug those muscles comfortably, and Ivan can't help but admire him appreciatively.

"Da, I would say so. Though, it is now time for bed. We have a long day tomorrow."

Alfred winces at the reminder while Ivan just chuckles. Ivan bids him goodnight, while heading off to bed.

"Wait!"

Ivan stops at the sound of Alfred's voice, turning around. Alfred stands there awkwardly, fiddling with his fingers and looking off to the side.

"Something wrong, Fredka?"

Alfred sighs, before seemingly gathering his courage.

"No no, it's just. Would you.. like to sleep with me tonight? In my bed I mean!"

Ivan's mind goes blank.

"...huh?"

Taking that response as a negative, Alfred quickly apologises and starts to rush past him.

He's stopped when a hand grabs his wrist. He looks up to Ivan with a red face, slightly misted eyes from embarrassment.

"Da."

Alfred startles. Then, his face breaks out into his signature smile, and it's like a switch has been flipped. It gives Ivan whiplash on just how quickly his emotions can change, and he's helpless to how Alfred drags them to bed.

They were too tired to get dressed in pajamas, and with pink faces decided to rather sleep in their underwear.

'*I'm not sure if Alfred will be comfortable sleeping with me. I tend to hug things in my sleep.'*

Ivan thought, deciding to rather not bring it up. After all, Alfred had been the one to offer that they sleep together.

"Come on, I'm tired."

Alfred's half asleep voice drifted from the blankets, and Ivan chuckled softly. Slowly, he shifts into the space with him, claiming one side for his own.

Alfred grumbles upon seeing this, and suddenly Ivan is yanked into his hold. Ivan, accepting his fate laughs again, and circles him in a hug.

Slowly, they drift off into sleep, the stress of the week finally catching up to them. They lay together, content in the others arms as soft snores echo through the room, happy mumbles of good dreams escaping.

What neither notice, however, is the multiple pairs of eyes peering through the window.

-

Heyooo. Guess what, the game thing was actually a lot of fun. Lmao, our rival school for the Dabi (sports event) got an absolute smack down by our first team rugby boys. 50-7!! I'm pretty sure my voice is gonna be fine tomorrow from all the cheering and screaming I did. Anyways, hope you enjoyed. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Memory 3.

[image]

9 April 1865

It's over. Finally, it's over.

Cheers echoed across the streets, waving flags put up everywhere. Songs were sung of Dixie lands defeat and soldiers returning home were rushing to their families.

The war was over for America.

But not for Alfred.

-

Alfred's hand shook, unable to move from the handle. Next to him stood his children, the ones that partook in the war. Behind the door stood the states that fought against them in cold blood, showing no hesitation in their brutality.

A tense air had surrounded them. Everyone had just one thought on their mind.

'Is it still them? Will they attack us on sight, try and kill them again?'

No one wanted to find out.

New Hampshire quietly walked up behind Alfred, placing a small (far too small, he shouldn't have let them in the war-) hand on his shoulder.

"We'll be fine, pops. They'll have snapped out of it by now. They still love us."

His words gave little reassurance, but still managed to lift the mood. Indiana nodded, Connecticut sighed, Delaware and Massachusetts glanced at the other, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania exchanged wary grins while the others crowded around the door.

Alfred breathed out deeply, and the wood creaked as it opened.

Slowly, ever so slowly, they edge into the room. Around a table sat the southern states, all seeming to be in various states of distress. They all had that look in their eyes, as one does after war, that broke Alfred's heart. He's pretty sure you could hear it shatter and fall to the floor in pieces.

Their entrance, despite trying to be silent, had the children (no, teens now-) bolt to a stand. Each and every one holds a military like stand, one hand to their chest the other behind them.

"SIR!"

Their strained voices shouted out in unison. Texas had his eyes shut tight, Mississippi bowed her head, Florida clenched his hands, Alabama had tears gathering and the Carolina Twins shoulders were shaking. Arkansas, the Virginias, Tennessee and Georgia couldn't look neither their siblings or their father in the eye.

Alfred's sure that if his heart wasn't broken before, it would've been buried in the dirt by now.

"At ease."

Alfred barely holds back tears at their shocked looks. He steps back, revealing their siblings behind him. He nods at them, gesturing for them to ' go reunite with your brother's and sisters.'

As if a spell had been broken, they all rushed into a group hug. Scattered laughs, tearful smiles and soft reassurances and apologies we're heard from the dog pile.

Alfred watched silently with tears streaming down his face, his heart aching. He still remembers every time he had to face his children in battle. He can only hope they forgive him.

He's brought out of his thoughts when hesitant steps approach him.

"Dad?"

A soft voice said.

"Nevada?"

Alfred turns to look at his son. He has his arms crossed over his chest, face scrunched up.

"I'm sorry, dad. I'm so so sorry."

His features soften, his cheeks glinting with tears. He motions towards his son, opening his arms as an invitation. Nevada bursts into tears, running into his father's embrace. Hearing the commotion, the dog piled states separate.

Buried in his sons hair, Alfred can only hear their footsteps as they wander closer, murmured apologies and wet spots on the back of his jacket as they join in.

They all eventually sink to the floor, a mess of tears and snot and desperately tight hugs.

"Promise me."

They go quiet.

"Promise me you'll never fight eachother again. Please."

His voice cracks on the end, audible through the crushing warmth.

"We promise."

They all notice he doesn't say his name.

-

If your losses outweigh your profits, did you really earn anything at all?

-

Heyooo. So again, not American (whoopeee!!/jk) so feel free to correct me n shit. Anyways, y'all won't BELIEVE what happened today. Our parents just got the message that our grade (only ours!!) was invited to the early viewing of Transformers One in theaters!! Like the release date is 27th September but WE get to see it 18th

September!!! When I tell you I was excited, holy hell. I am a MASSIVE transformers fan and getting this news blew my mind. I cannot believe we were this lucky. Anyways, I've rambled enough lmao. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 32: A Nation-napping

[image] [image] [image]

What neither notice, however, is the multiple pairs of eyes peering through the window.

-

Ivan wakes slowly, but not to Alfred's warmth next to him. No, be wakes to whispers, murmers, and rough rope digging into his sides. Instantly, he's put on alert, though he tries to not let it show.

He breathes deeply, trying to mimic the state of sleep. While he does so, he strains his ears trying to listen to the voices around him.

"*..can't let him-"*

"- ouldve killed when we had-"

"..dad.."

"..wake him?"

"No choice-"

Ivan is in serious trouble. From the sounds of things, these people meant trouble. Discussing murder and killing right in front of him?

Does not matter. Ivan is Russia, and he easily has the strength to rip himself out of these ropes.

Just as he flexes his hands, a voice speaks directly to him.

"We're gonna have to stop you right there, commie."

...commie? Alfred? No, Alfred stopped calling him that long time ago. He opens his eyes, wincing slightly at the bright lights shining directly into his face. Once his vision focuses, Ivan notes with slight amusement and horror that he's surrounded. By 50 teenagers,

almost all emitting an aura similar to Alfred's during ww2.

'*Hm. So these are the rest of his states. They look much different in person.*'

He's brought out of his musing when a boy steps forward, cracking his knuckles. Ivan almost lets the shock show on his face when he realises who, excatly, this state is.

"Mhm, recognise me do you?"

Alaska growls under his breath. Ivan nods, trying to act uncaring and unbothered. He can tell they see through him, a hundred eyes on him. He won't let them get to him.

"Da."

Alaska quirks a brow, though the irritated look stays. He siblings are quiet behind him.

"And do you know why you're here?"

Ivan chuckles, resisting the urge to kol-kol as he knows it won't work on them.

"Nyet, I do not know why I have been kidnapped."

Ivan feigns ignorance with a smile. This, evidently, irritates the shit out of Alaska and he's only just able to hold back from punching him. Instead, he grabs him by the scarf, pulling him up face to face. We'll, as good as one can be when tied to a chair.

"Now you listen here fucker. We were... *fine* with you being 'friends' with our dad, if a bit sceptical. But now?"

He brings Ivan closer, snarling,

"**When we find out you're dating our father?**"

Ivan feels cold wash over him from all directions, the intensity of 50 murderous glares upon him in seconds. He stares at Alaska, not backing down. In the back of his mind, he knows he has to keep his

cool, lest he lose his chance with Alfred.

"***We refuse to stand and watch.***"

A chorus of voices, all differing in pitches and tones, echo back to him. Alaska steps back with a nasty grin, giving him a once over.

"You know, dad'll probably notice if we hurt you physically. He said nothing about speaking our thoughts."

Alaska fades back into the crowd, returning to silence. Minute by minute, a state steps forward and says what they think about Ivan.

"You're not good enough for him."

"You'll just end up hurting him."

"You should've stayed in the meeting that day."

"Hurt pops again, and I'm coming for your dick. Not in the good way."

"Step foot on my land and I'm feeding you to the tornados."

"Get within breathing distance of us and father together and consider your wig snatched."

"You must leave us alone. We were happier when you weren't in our life."

Ivan let's them talk, getting their feelings and warnings and death threats off of their chests. In all honesty, it does hurt. It does strike him deep in his heart. But he's used to it, and won't let it show. And once they finish, some heaving with breath, Ivan speaks,

"Was he really happier?"

His question silences the room. N. Carolina scoffs,

"What do ya mean?"

Ivan hums.

"Before we got together, or even before we were friends once again. Was he really, truly happy with just you all?"

Instantly, the states began to rise up in indignation, but one states voice cuts through them all.

"No."

Rhode Island has her head hung low, as if she couldn't believe it herself.

"No, no he wasn't."

The children around him seem to deflate in on themselves, the frigid aura dissipating.

"Then why is it so hard to believe I really, truly love him?"

Ivan's soft voice cuts through the tense atmosphere. He's smiling again, but this time it's something sad, not like his usual ones.

Washington opens his mouth, as if to respond, before a door slams open and light floods the darkened room.

"**What. The fuck. Is going on here?**"

-

Heyoo. So, we're approaching end chapters soon. Dunno how many more, but we'll see. Anyways, interesting thing about Z.A (Zuid Afrika) is that we take respecting our elders or those above us as children very seriously. If we do not know the surname of an adult, we call them Mr/Ms or Mevrou of meneer. We don't even say our teachers surname, for example, Mevrou Van der Merve. We just say ma'am or sir. Saying their last name like that is considered taboo and sometimes disrespectful (for us teens).
Anyways, here's some VERY rough countryhumans art I did.

Oops, almost forgot. Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 33: A Very Pissed Off Father

[image]

Washington opens his mouth, as if to respond, before a door slams open and light floods the darkened room.

"**What. The Fuck. Is going on**?"

-

The temperature in the room drops drastically, all the states freezing and turning to the door. Standing with his arms crossed over his chest, still in his underwear, was their very pissed off father.

His glare could melt ice, and most states tried to subtly hide their weapons behind or inside their clothing.

"**Drop them. Now.**"

Alfred growled out, teeth gritted. Immediately, the teens drop all items on instinct, the noises filling the room. Once the room had returned to awkward silence, all the states avoiding eye contact, Alfred spoke.

"Now. Just what in high hell is going on here?"

He says, slightly more calm after he took a few deep breaths. That didn't stop the irritated twitch of his brow, though. Ivan, still sitting tied to the chair, watched all of this with an amused smile.

"Um. Well, we were just.."

Mississippi stutters, sweating. He looks around for help from his siblings, to no avail. Ivan almost laughs at the look of betrayal he sends them.

"I'm waiting."

Alfred taps his bare foot on the tiled floor, sounding like a clock ticking down. All the states start to hurry to answer, some louder and filled with more truth than others.

"We just wanted to welcome him!"

"We were just saying hi!"

"Giving him advice?"

"Making sure he was happy!"

"We were threatening him."

Everyone goes quiet at Hawaii's admission. They all send her subtle glares, but are cowed back into submission by their father. Currently, Ivan is enjoying this show way too much to be normal.

"Thank you, for your honesty Hawaii."

Alfred grits out, his grip on his arms tightening to the point it'll bruise. Hawaii nods, though as she's also guilty backs away quickly.

Noticing his quickly darkening arms, Ivan speaks up softly,

"Sunflower, if your grip gets any tighter, your arms just might fall off."

Alfred jumps, as if just registering that Ivan was there. Quickly walking over to him, he rips the ropes apart with ease, helping Ivan to a stand.

Alfred can't help but chuckle, loosening the tense atmosphere. Ivan raises an eyebrow, wondering what exactly brought that on.

"Sorry, sorry, it's just.. I just realised we're both still in our underwear."

Ivan cracks a small smile. In all honesty, he'd been eyeing Alfred's body the whole time, so he didn't have a problem with it. Distantly,

he could feel the intense glares of teens in front of him.

"Well, it is not like either of us expected to be woken in the middle of the night, Fredka."

Alfred sighs at this, sending an annoyed glare to his children cowering in the corner. Now that Ivan thinks about it, where even are they?

"Alfred?"

"Yes, Ivan?"

"Where are we?"

"The basement, of course!"

"...the basement."

"Yep!"

A sigh.

"That is all I am going to get, am I?"

"Hey, I don't know why this apartment building has an eerie basement either! Blame the kids!"

Alfred whips around, startling his children and Ivan.

"Speaking of which.."

Alfred then proceeds to chew his kids out for the better half of an hour, half naked, in his underwear, with an arm around his equally half naked russian boyfriend. Said boyfriend watches from the sidelines, astonished at the tone Alfred takes on with his kids. It's the, 'I'm not mad, just disappointed', that makes even Ivan cringe.

Eventually, after a while, and seeing that Alfred wouldn't be stopping, Ivan steps up.

"Fredka, it is okay. I think they have had enough."

Alfred breathes in deeply, once, twice, before he sighs. The kids all sag in satisfaction, happy to no longer be facing their father's wrath.

"Now, before we rightfully go back to bed."

The states tense in anticipation.

"I want you all to apologise to Ivan."

"Wait, Fredka."

Alfred looks at him, surprised. Ivan sighs, but says,

"They do not need to apologise. I know they were only doing it out of fear and protection of you."

The states look shocked at the prospect of Ivan of all people defending them. They, who had discussed killing and threatening him. Even Alfred looks startled, stunned into silence with a gaping mouth.

"Huh. Well, that's fine then. But, you all have to promise me one thing."

Alfred finally responds, gripping Ivan's hand tightly. The states perk up, ready to make it up to their father.

"At least **try** to warm up to Ivan? I actually love him, yknow, and it would be nice to have my children get along with the person I love."

Hesitantly, the states nod, glancing at Ivan. Obviously, it'll take getting used to, but who's to say they can't be civil?

"Now, we're going back to bed. For the first time, I really hope I don't see you kids in the morning."

-

Heyoo, shorter chapter but oh well. Anyways, did you know South African people were voted most friendly in the world? Honestly, if you're in the right places, I can see why. As long as you don't piss

off the Boers, you won't have an angry Afrikaner calling you a doos lmao. Anyways, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 34: An Early Morning

[image]

"Now, we're going back to bed. For the first time, I really hope I don't see you kids in the morning."

-

Alfred groaned, slamming a hand down on the annoyingly persistent alarm. He's pretty sure he heard it crack, maybe shatter, but that's a problem for later Alfred.

It was 6 A.M. Both he and Ivan would have to get up now if they want to get to the meeting on time. Of course, they'd managed to get a few more hours of sleep after last night's fiasco, but that doesn't mean they have to like it.

Turning to his boyfriend, who was currently spooning him (which Alfred was very much enjoying), he couldn't help but watch as he snoozed on peacefully, the rhythmical rise and fall of his chest like a hypnotizing pattern.

He places a tan hand on his bare chest, tracing the atrocious amount of scars laced on the skins surface. It makes Ivan's breath stutter, yet he doesn't wake. Alfreds glad for that, at least.

Slowly, as his hands trace the scars, they eventually make their way up to his neck. Instantly, his hands freeze in their place. That is a spot he is not allowed to touch. After all, he was the one who caused it.

Ivan always liked to wear his scarf, no matter what weather. However, it was more for decoration than a real purpose. But after their fight? Ivan made sure his scarf showed absolutely nothing of his neck.

Alfred can feel the guilt crawling up his back, and he sighs as he brings his hand down to Ivans chest. Before can do anything else,

his wrist is stopped and clutched but another. Startled, Alfred looks up to Ivans sleepy eyes, watching him with curiosity. Alfred was not expecting this, and it's obvious with how he stutters out excuses and apologies quicker than lightning, before his hand is gently placed on a scarred throat.

Alfred let's out a choked sigh, his hand ghosting the rough skin. Ivan hums in content, seemingly unbothered by the contact. How? Alfred doesn't know. In fact, he's completely baffled as to why Ivan's even let him near his throat to begin with.

"Vanya?"

Alfred whispers, soft voice echoing through the silent morning. Ivan opens a sleepy eye.

"Da, Fredka?"

Alfred looks down, hands still tracing the skin with a slight shake to it.

"Why are you letting me..."

He trails off at the end, unable to find the words. Unable to face it, more like. Cowardly Alfred, never fighting his own battles.

"Because I trust you."

Ivan's blunt statement makes Alfred still in shock. He closes his wide open mouth, looking back up at Ivan, who now sports an amused smile look.

"..oh."

It's all Alfred can say in this situation. I mean, what else could he? Thankfully, Ivan does not seem to take offense, instead chuckling and pulling Alfred closer to him. He nuzzles into Alfreds golden hair, sighing in content.

Alfred, meanwhile, is now squished between Ivan's massive chest. Of course, the heart to heart moment is now ruined by how red his face has gone and how much he wishes to live the rest of his life

like this.

However, nation duty calls. And alas, he must remove himself from heaven.

"Ivaaaann.."

He mutters, slowly pushing himself away. Ivan whines, like a child, while Alfred can only sigh.

"Come on, we've got that meeting today. We have to get ready."

He slurs his words slightly, rubbing the sand out of his eyes. Ivan groans, playfully glaring at him. Ignoring this, Alfred edges out of the bed, shivering at the cold.

God, he wishes he got more sleep. However, hearing no movement behind him, he turns around. Ivan is buried under the blanket with the duvet over his head.

Seems like someone didn't want to get out of bed today.

Raising an eyebrow, he walks over to the bathroom. Having brought up 50 children, he knows just the trick to wake him.

He fills a cup with cold water, walking back over to his unsuspecting boyfriend. Alfred tries to keep his laughter inside, managing to stop from bursting out into giggles.

'*3, 2, 1.. NOW!*'

Alfred proceeds to dump to entirety of the water onto Ivan's covered head. His betrayed screams of cold water agony ring through the house.

Oh well. He should've gotten up when Alfred said he must.

-

Heyooo. On god I'm so freaking tired and idk why. Probs cus it's 8 min to 23:00. Anyways, just wanted to say, @RulerofBirbs, you are an absolute g, thanks for voting for legitimately all of my chapters

in one sitting. Glad you've liked the story so far lmao. Anyways, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

Chapter 35: A Meeting of Peril.

[image]

Alfred nervously fiddles with his tie, watching the ticking clock. It annoyed him, as it felt like it was counting down to his doom.

"Fredka, if you keep playing with your tie, it will end up much more matted than that hair of yours."

Ivan's amused voice startles him, and Alfred whips around to glare playfully at him.

"I'll have you know there's nothing wrong with my hair, snow white!"

Ivan gasps, placing a hand on his heart in mock hurt.

"Such an insult! Does little American think he can hurt the great Russia with his tiny words?"

Alfred scoffs, but a smile tugs at his lips. A week ago, that sentence would have sent him into a frenzy, rearing for a fight. Yet now, he just punches Ivan softly in the shoulder, shaking his head.

"Come on, Ivan. We don't want to be late now do we?"

Ivan cringes, and Alfred can only sigh. It's obvious they both don't want to go, but the longer they waited, the more suspicious they got. After all, everyone wants to see how this will play out. Like a bunch of hungry crows, flying above and waiting for their prey to tire.

Alfred takes Ivan's hand into his, looking him deep into his eyes. The fear and uncertainty is mirrored between them.

"C'mon, Vanya. We'll be fine. We're superpowers after all, right? Nothing can hurt us!"

Alfred's reassurance seems to help lower Ivan's guard, if only a

little. For the first time, it seems he looks to Alfred for guidance.

Despite being many years older than Alfred, his experience in relationships wasn't that much broader. Going through life, he learned that fear made people listen. Fear made people talk.

But not with Alfred. Never with him. So for now, just this once, he looks to his lover for guidance.

"Alright. Let us go, then."

Ivan sighs, a smile tugging at his lips. Alfred grins back, dragging him through the door.

If only they knew what awaited them.

-

Oh these two.

How they've grown to know each other.

How they've grown to love each other.

How they've grown..

To..

Mourn

Each other..

Do you see how much they need the other? How much they now depend on each other? How they always have?

Such a pity, isn't it?

Oh well.

They should have learned, by now.

Nothing ever lasts.

-

There was silence in the car. It was tense, but not uncomfortable. It was the sort of silence when you knew something was going to happen, and that you couldn't stop it.

Alfred's hand on the steering wheel tightens drastically, to the point where Ivan has to lean over and pat his arm softly to loosen his grip. There is a very noticeable finger shaped dent now present. He sighs. Guess superhuman strength is both a blessing and a curse.

Once they stop outside the building, they sit inside the car for what feels like a millennium.

"Can't believe we're actually going to a meeting where the only thing that happens is us being interrogated about our relationship."

Alfred's bemused voice breaks through the quiet, and Ivan snorts.

"Da, it does not seem real, does it Sunflower?"

They share a chuckle, feeling a bit lighter than before. Alfred glances out the car window towards the massive white building that houses their doom, and winces.

"Whelp, no use in delaying the inevitable. Let's get this show on the road!"

Alfred bounces out of the car energetically, pointedly ignoring Ivan's confused murmer of 'what show?'. Once Ivan has pulled himself out of the vehicle, Alfred takes his gloved hand and intertwines their fingers.

Alfred grins at the raised eyebrow, proceeding to drag Ivan to the front doors with minimal resistance. Of course, Ivan could easily resist, but he decided to let the American take the lead with an amused smile.

"Slow down, Fredka, we do not want to fall over-!"

Ivan yelped as they sped down the carpeted hallways, the thudding of their shoes echoing through the building.

-

It was eerily quiet in the meeting room. Far, far too quiet. It hung over them like smoke, choking them out.

"Are we sure they will turn up?"

Englands voice breaks through the tense silence. The meeting rooms occupants shift in their seats, eyeing each other. Germany sighed deeply, eyebrow twitching.

"They will if they know what's good for them."

He mutters angrily, gritting his teeth. North Italy sits to the side of him, happily chatting to his annoyed brother who Spain has his arm around.

Japan sat on the right of him, looking more down than one could think for the quiet man. China sat beside him, giving him a concerned glance every now and then as he hugged his panda.

England, the first to have spoken up in what felt like forever, sat between Canada and France. He subtly leans away from his son, as Canada was emitting an aura he was decidedly not comfortable with. The blank look on his face combined with the clenched hands did not do him any good.

France had the same idea, though he was a bit less tense than England. However, he has not spoken a word since he entered the room. This was very out of the ordinary for the french man, and it worried England greatly (no matter how much he 'hated' the man).

"Francis? What's wrong with you?"

He asks bluntly. By Frances wince, he can tell something was on his mind. He looks away from him, glancing at the door. One of England's bushy brows twitch, irritated.

"Well? Speak up!"

France sighs, idly thumbing the rose on his shirt. He's fully clothed, what a miracle.

"I cannot help but think dear America will be angry with me."

"Of course he will be, you buffoon."

France flinches back at his unforgiving tone, hand curling on the rose, flattening it. England sighs, placing a hand on his shoulder.

"You were wrong to expose their relationship. Even I can see that. And the boy will be angry with you, that is true. But Alfred is a forgiving person by nature. You can earn his trust back."

France seems to relax, tension leaving him as his shoulder slump. His elegantly brushed hair gains its sparkle back, and he no longer looks as depressed as before.

"That doesn't mean Russia will be happy with you either, frog."

England hasn't seen France pale that quickly since he turned his hair pink.

Before he can comment on it, however, he's distracted by the opening of the door. He quickly whips his head around, expecting to see the men of the hour standing there.

Instead, he's greeted by two sisters.

'*Dear god.. I fear we won't survive this meeting after all.*'

Ukraine steps in silently, smoothing out her dress. Unlike her overalls she usually wears, her current outfit is very easy to move in. That's mirrored in Belarus's outfit, who is unnaturally silent. She keeps her head down as they move to their seats, Ukraine with a light hand on her back guiding her.

England can't help but grimace. He observes the room, noting the now uncomfortable silence that has befallen them.

Even Germany avoids looking at Belarus, not even admonishing the sisters for their lateness.

"We apologise for the delay, Germany. The traffic was quite a mess!"

Ukraine's cheerful voice cuts through the awkward atmosphere, startling a few nations. Either she doesn't notice how tense they are, or she chooses to ignore it and continue on how she is.

"It's.. alright, Ukraine. Thank you for arriving."

Germany manages to get out, nodding towards her. She beams, leaning back in her seat. England eyes Belarus warily, but she still hasn't moved.

He feels movement from beside him, and he glances over at Canada. He'd almost forgotten he was there.

"Canada, my boy? Are you feeling alright?"

England asks hesitantly, noticing the deepening gouges in the wooden table. Canada's blank expression doesn't change, but his eyes lock onto Belarus's still figure.

"If that bitch tries anything..."

'*Alrighty, I am not opening that can of worms.*'

England discreetly edges his seat away from him, hissing at France to move up. France glances at him, confused, until he catches sight of Canada and goes paler than a Victorian child.

As the tension in the room begins to rise, they're all startled by a knock on the door.

Everyone tenses.

Belarus looks up from the table.

The door opens.

-

Soon.

Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 36: An End to Something..

[image]

As the tension in the room begins to rise, they're all startled by a knock on the door.

Everyone tenses.

Belarus looks up from the table.

The door opens.

-

Alfred huffs, slightly out of breath as he drags his boyfriend behind him. God, he knew Ivan was a smidge taller than him, but that doesn't mean he can't keep his pace.

"C'mon, Ivan! We gotta go!"

He tugs him nearer, the thudding of their feet matching that of their hearts. They fly up the stairs, not having the patience for the elevator.

"Slow down Fredkaaaa-!"

Ivan yelps as he's dragged even further down the hallway, scarf flagging in the wind left behind them. They don't pass by anyone else, country or otherwise. Alfred notes this as suspicious, but quickly brushes it off. They've got bigger fish to fry.

Eventually, they make it to the third floor, stopping to catch their breath. Once they do, they turn to the hallway. Alfred stills, freezing in place. He can feel Ivans eyes on him, burning into the back of his head.

"You ready?"

Alfred says, meeting Ivan's intense gaze.

"Da."

Alfred breathes in deeply, not even noticing when they make it to the meeting room doors. He reaches out to the handle, hesitant. Maybe.. this wasn't such a good idea after all.

'*No. You are the mother fucking US of A. You do not back down in the face of fear!*'

Alfred flinches as he hears Ivan chuckle behind him.

"I can hear your thoughts from here, Fredka. Worry not, all will be well."

Alfred sighs, clenching Ivan's hand tighter.

'*But why, then, do I feel so uneasy?*'

He takes one last, long look at Ivan. He looks back. They share a moment if silence, love and trust passing between them. Alfred nods, a small smile gracing his lips. Ivan half-smiles back, and they both place a hand on the door handle.

The door creaks open.

-

And so, at last, they face what was foretold.

It's almost haunting, how similar it is to their death match they shared years earlier.

However, this time?

Who knows who'll make it out alive..

-

They step inside quietly, every sound echoing through the room. Alfred can feel all eyes on them, and he shifts uncomfortably. The only thing keeping him from running was Ivan's hand on his back.

"Nice of you to finally arrive, America."

England's voice cuts through the silence, emerald gaze observing their every step. Though, Alfred notes a hint of fear in his eyes, as if hes.. afraid.

'*Why is he so scared? Surely entering a room isn't that bad*?'

Alfred ponders, glancing over to Ivan, confused. He's startled by Ivan's paler-than-normal face. He tugs on his jacket, not receiving any movement nor response. He just stands, frozen.

"Ivan?"

He whispers, concerned. Again, he receives no answer. He can hear the subtle chatter of the other nations in the room, but it all fades to the back of his head when he follows Ivan's gaze.

Dark, angry blue-violet eyes encompass him, the glare sending a chill down his spine. Sure, nothing scares him, he's the hero after all.

But maybe, just this once, he's fearing for his life.

"C'mon, Ivan. You can sit by me."

Alfred tugs him towards his seat, snapping Ivan out of his daze. He can feel the striking gaze following them closely, along with all the other pairs. It's quiet as they make their way to their seats, and only when they've settled next to each other does the silence break.

"So, why was this meeting called? I know for a fact the next one wasn't due for another month."

Alfred's annoyed voice rings out, stopping everyone in their conversations. He subtly shifts, uncomfortable. Glancing over to Ivan, he can see his situation mirrored, though his expression has gone perfectly blank and his grip is tight on Alfred's hand. Seems like they both don't like all the attention on them.

"For your information, America, the reason we have all been called here is due to a disturbing picture sent to the nations group chat."

Germany calls out, glaring at the two. Alfred's mouth falls open in shock, and he can feel Ivan still beside him. He looks to the left, where his family sits, yet they avoid his gaze. Only his brother dares to look at him, and even then, it's an almost pitying gaze.

"'Disturbing?'"

Alfred almost growls out, enraged on both his and Ivan's behalf.

"Call either me or Ivan that again and we'll see just how disturbing I can get."

Germany seems surprised by the vicious response, and by the wide eyed looks on all the other countries, it seems they weren't expecting it either. He pointedly ignores Belarus's ever increasing, silent rage in the back.

"He has a point, America. This sudden switch between you and Russia isn't normal for the two of you. Especially with Russia, of all nations."

Alfred doesn't know who piped up, but the anger that overcame him was quick and sudden, so he couldn't help but shout out,

"HEY! There's absolutely nothing wrong with me dating Ivan, and if you don't like it you can all fuck right off!"

Alfred seethes, standing abruptly from his chair as he slams his hands on the table. The rooms occupants startle, each one's reactions varying in degree.

"It's okay, Fredka. It's nothing I'm not used to."

Ivan's soft voice calms him slightly as he places a hand on his shoulder, yet Alfred can't help but sigh.

"But you shouldn't be. We- *They* shouldn't be so used to treating you like an outsider. As if you're any different than them."

Ivan just smiles sadly, and shakes his head. Alfred breathes out deeply, before turning to address the room again. Here's to hoping they'll finally leave them alone after this..

"Now, if nothing else is going to happen except me and Ivan being judged for our relationship, then we'll be leaving. Screw you all, bye suckers!"

He snatches Ivan by the wrist, tugging him to a stand. Ivan sighs fondly (shocking the nations, who knew he could experience something like fondness?) and walks beside Alfred as they make their way to the door. He can hear a scuffle behind him, as if a few nations are getting up.

Alfred ignores the calls of his younger brother and family, preferring to keep on walking. He can see Ivan glance back, likely at Ukraine, before his eyes widen drastically.

"WATCH OUT!-"

But he's too late.

Time seems to slow down for Alfred. He can see his brother's mouth open, as if he's shouting. Englands emerald eyes are wide, as if he saw something shocking. France has gone pale. Japan looks ready to faint. Germany is stock still, unmoving. North Italy clutches onto his brother. Ukraine has a hand to her mouth, as if she was gasping.

Why?

He slowly, painstakingly slowly, manages to look over to Ivan. He has an arm outstretched, as if to catch him. Tears stream down his lovely pale skin.

Why?

Alfred is so very confused. Until he feels a spot of wetness on his chest.

Why?

He looks down. A knife. There's a knife in his chest.

Why?

He drags his gaze towards the corner of the room. Belarus stands

there, hand out, as if she had just thrown something.

What?

Oh.

She did this.

It's starting to hurt now. He can feel the pain encompassing him.

Alfred falls to his knees as time starts to speed up, the shouting and yelling and chaos a blurr of noise in the back if his head.

He coughs into his shaky hand.

Theres blood.

How did that get there?

"-you'll be fine trust me Sunflower come now we must get you somewhere safe-"

Ivan?

"LET ME AT HER! LET ME GO, ENGLAND! LET ME *KILL HER!"*

Matthew?

"-strain her, quickly! We don't know-"

England?

Alfred pries his eyes open (when had he close them?) and tries to focus above him. He's laying on Ivan's lap, his scarf pressing down on the wound.

"'m sorry.."

He mumbles, feeling the black edge at his vision again. Why is everything so red?

"Whatever for, Fredka?"

Ivan's voice is high. Panicked. Alfred doesn't like that. It should be cool, calm.

"gettinb blood.. on.. scarf.. sorry. 'm gonna sleep now.. love you, Vanya."

He doesn't hear the rest of Ivan's panicked screaming as his vision fades to black, the blissfulness of the dark pulling into the abyss.

-

What a tradegy.

Oh?

You weren't expecting this?

But..

Don't you remember?

It's been obvious from the beginning!

Two can keep a secret,

If one of them is dead.

-

Heyooo. So, few more chapters left. What happens next? Hah. You'll have to see.

Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 37: An Epiphany

[image]

Ivan can't believe this.

How could he have been so *careless?*

He knew.

He knew his sister would pull something like this.

And now his lover is bleeding out, right before his very eyes.

God, how did it come to this?

Alfred's eyes are closing. No, no no no they should not be doing that. The red is everywhere. There's blood on his hands.

It's 1991 all over again.

Except this time, Alfred's nearing death, and he's still standing.

This can't be happening.

Ivan refuses to accept it.

Yet Alfreds eyes close, his hand goes limp.

"Alfred?"

No answer. Ivans head feels like it's filled with static. His hand shakes as he reaches out to cup Alfred's face, blood staining his tan skin.

"Sunflower?"

Nothing.

An agonized, heart wrenching scream is heard.

Who's screaming like that? It's quite annoying.

His throat is starting to hurt. How come?

Oh.

It's him. He's the one screaming.

It occurs to him that this has never happened before. He's never felt such emotion for a man, let alone anyone in his life.

He loves Alfred.

He loves him so goddamn much.

And his sister took him from him.

His sister.

Pure, undulterd *rage* is all he feels. Slowly, he sets Alfred's head down on the floor, making sure not to bump anything. He slowly rises from the floor, his hand clenching.

Ivan can feel Alfred's blood drip from his hand. He starts to shake. A dark aura starts emitting from him, yet his face is blank. An iciness overtakes the room.

He turns to the chaos that now reigns in the corner of the room, his cold glare zeroing in on one person.

His head clears, and he can hear the shouting of the other nations. Narrowing his eyes, he spots Canada being held back by France and England, though they seem to be on the verge of letting him go if their angered faces are anything to go by. Ivan spots tears running down Canada's face, mirroring his own.

But unlike Canada, Ivan isn't being held back.

He walks past them, ignoring their yells. He can deal with them later. Right now, his focus is on Belarus. Currently, she's being held back by Ukraine. Except she has the smuggest of grins on her face, as of she had just won the Olympics. Ukraine looks strained, like

she is one step away from strangling her sister with the tight grip she has on her arms.

Everyone notices as Ivan steps forward.

Ivan locks eyes with his sister, and Ukraine nods, releasing Belarus. She steps away, and turns her head. She knew what was coming.

"Brother! I finally got rid of that American scum! Now we can be together without him getting in the way! Aren't you happy?"

Belarus's thrilled voice rings through his thoughts, silencing the room. Ivan didn't know exactly what came over him at that moment, but one minute he was standing in front of his crazed sister and the next he was withdrawing his hand from a punch that sent her flying.

The crack as her back met the wall sent a wave of sick pleasure through Ivan.

As she slid to the floor, coughing, Ivan spoke with a heavy voice, dripping with venom,

"Nyet, sister. I am not happy. Because that,"

He points to Alfred, still and lifeless on the floor. He can't bear to look at him, and he can hear more than see Canada break into a fresh wave of tears.

"Was the love of my life."

He steps forward, towering over her.

"*And you killed him."*

He grabs a fistful of her shirt, bringing her up to his height. He glares, trying to show all the pain he made him go through in his eyes. By the widening of hers, he can tell it worked.

"I will *never* forgive you for this."

His voice cracks on the end of the sentence. He really hates crying,

appearing weak. Especially in the presence of others. But now, he couldn't care less.

Dropping Belarus to the floor, he swiftly turns around. He marches away from her sobbing form, and stopping gently at Alfred's body.

"STEP AWAY FROM MY BROTHER!"

Canada screams, and Ivan can hear him running up behind. Ivan sighs, softly, before turning around and catching him in a hug. Canada sucks in a breath, startled, yet eyes still wild and angry.

"I'm taking him to the state house. He'll be much safer there when he wakes up."

Ivan whispers, and Canada stops struggling. He can feel the eyes of everyone on them, and his skin prickles. He glares over his shoulder.

"Just this once. I'm trusting you."

Canada growls, stepping away from his embrace. Ivan nods, watching as he heads back over to Franc and England, who watch with fearful eyes.

Ivan sighs. He really, really wants to continue crying, but there's no time. First, he has to get Alfred to safety.

He picks Alfreds body up gently, pulling the knife out with distaste. He wraps his scarf around the still bleeding wound, pressing on it as he walks out of the meeting room doors.

He honestly doesn't care what happens to his sister. Not anymore.

-

Darkness.

That's all he could see.

He was stuck, swimming in the void.

Where is he?

He tried to move his arm, free himself from the sludge.

His chest hurts.

-

Ivan sighs, cutting off the last of the bandage from the roll. He never thought he'd have to use it on anyone other than himself.

He picks up Alfred's glasses, placing them back on the bridge of his nose. He lays on the main bed, asleep, with a multitude of bandages around his tanned chest. It's likely to scar.

Ivan flinches at the reminder of what his sibling had done, but just shakes his head as if to will away the thought.

He places a gentle hand on Alfreds, letting out a shaky sigh as tears gather in his eyes. He'd sent out a message to the states hours ago, and they'll be arriving soon.

Ivan lays his head down on Alfreds chest, trying to hold in the tears. He doesn't know when Alfred will wake up. It's an injury from another nation, after all. It could be days, weeks, months.

He breathes in deeply, letting the tears flow down his face as he closes his eyes.

How he wishes he could turn back time.

A gentle hand cupping his face cuts off his sobs, and Ivan startles as he looks up.

Tired, dull blue eyes stare lovingly into his.

"Why're.. you crying, Vanya?"

Ivan sits, shocked, before his face screws up and he launches himself into Alfreds arms. He hears Alfred give a small oof, but as they lock eyes, Alfred knows what to do.

Their lips lock, desperate and fierce, as if it would be their last one. It almost was.

"You stupid, silly man!"

Ivan says, breathless after breaking away from the kiss. Alfred winces, but a small smile is still present on his face.

"Never scare me like that again!"

Alfred chuckles.

"I promise, Vanya."

-

Heyoo. So, I might get grounded, so I might not update for the next few days. Hope this one helped heal your broken hearts lmao.

Anyways, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

Chapter 38: An Epilogue

[image]

"Never scare me like that again!"

Alfred chuckles.

"I promise, Vanya."

-

Alfred groans, slapping half heartedly at his blaring alarm clock. God, why does he ever get up so early in the morning?

"Good morning, Sunflower."

Alfred turns his head, finding Ivan with his back turned to him. Alfred grunts as he sits up, mindful of his chest. It had been a week, full of resting and changing bandages and tearful hugs from his kids. He had to talk down so many attempted murders it's a miracle no one ended up dead. The state house was now bustling with noise for the first time in years, and Alfred's heart almost burst with joy.

"Morning to you too, Darling."

He can hear Ivan's breath stutter at the nickname, and he snickers. He's quickly cut off when a scarf is thrown at him while a red faced Ivan curses at him in Russian. Alfred just continues to laugh.

"Pa! Ruski! It's breakfast time, come on down!"

"We'll be there in a few minutes!"

Alfred calls out to his son. In the week he'd been resting, somehow, someway, his children had warmed up to his lover. Alfred thinks it had something to do with them coexisting in the same house, while Ivan just shakes his head with a slightly smug look. Alfred prefers not to go down that rabbit hole.

Alfred stretches his arms above his head, moaning in relief once he feels the cracks. He goes slightly light headed, stumbling. Thankfully, he's caught by Ivan's strong, calloused hands.

"Falling asleep already, Alfred?"

Alfred smirked, leaning his head back on Ivans chest contently.

"Maaaaybe. You're just so comfortable..."

Alfred fake swoons, placing a hand on his head as he sinks further back. Ivan chuckles, wrapping his arms around him.

Ivan places a soft kiss on Alfred's shoulder, Alfred laughing as he turns his head and pecks him on the cheek in retaliation. They both giggle, beaming as the room gradually warms.

They stand together inside the slowly lightening room, watching the rising sun through an open window.

Alfred felt as if this was an end to something.

No, not an end.

Perhaps, a new beginning.

One where they don't have to fear the other. To hate the other.

Where they are finally free..

To *love.*

...

"Hey Vanya?"

"Yes, Fredka?"

"I have so much paperwork to do."

Ivan snorts.

"That's an understatement. The pile on your desk is taller than both

of us combined."

A sigh.

"God damn it."

-

There are many things within the world that humans do net yet know about.

Scientifically? I suppose they do.

Magically? Pff, they wish.

Nation wise?

Well.

That's up to them if they choose to look deeper.

To *see* them.

To *know* them.

But what do I know? I'm just a human, after all.

Yet Ivan and Alfred aren't.

And their story?

Hah.

You've come so far, and only now you question it?

Don't you *see?*

They've grown. Oh, how they've grown.

They learned to trust again.

They learned to love again.

And they couldn't have done it,

Without you.

Yes, you.

You've followed their journey from the beginning.

Laughed at them.

Grew angry with them.

Cursed them.

And so much more.

You *saw* them.

You *know* them.

And for that,

I thank you.

I hope you've enjoyed this little book of mine.

Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag my Dear Reader.

-

End.

-

...or is it?

Thank You!

[image]

So. This is it, huh? The story ends. After 46 parts, 37 chapters, nearly 30k words, 12 thousand reads and 600+ votes.

I cannot thank you all enough.

When I first started this story, it was due to the fact I couldn't find more like it anywhere else. And this story is none other than ***The Thirty Day Roomates by Nicetwin123 on Ao3***. PLEASE go read it if you enjoyed this book, they have much better characterisation than my Ivan and Alfred. Also, it's unlocked, so you can read it for free.

So, thanks to that story, this ass version was born. I'm gonna be honest with you, it's hard saying goodbye to this thing. Not uploading every second day has been hard trying to get used to.

And frankly, this has made my highschool year just that much more memorable. Honestly, I don't think I could have made it through without having something like this.

So, now I have two options for you all.

A. The prequel:
In this, I will explore more of Russia and Americas history together, aswell as the massive fight that fateful day that gave them their scars.

B. The sequel:
A direct continuation of this book, I will explore the happenings of this books aftermath not only on Alfred and Ivan, but the other nations too.

Of course, this is all up to you. Whatever one receives the most positivity, I shall begin creating a storyline and chapters.

Now, back to you.

Haha, yes, you.

I was never one for recieving compliments. Still aren't. So to see so, *so many* of you enjoying my book, really warmed my heart. God, I squealed like a little girl with each and every vote/comment I got.

You've all been with me since the beginning, through my worst (which I still cannot thank you enough for being patient about) and my best.

This has been one of the biggest journeys for me, as I was going in blind. I didn't expect much for my first book, happily accepting criticism and corrections. The Hetalia community is such a beautiful one, and even if you don't come from hetalia, you are included. I got such positive feedback from you all, and you're the reason this book has gotten to where it is today.

So thank you.

Thank you to the voters:

GlissBunBun666 this storys first ever voter. Without you, this story likely wouldn't have made it as far as I thought.
SyriZeroSix
VocalinaSalina
LilianaLeal1
Dari-Daro
ChissssDCS
ak2020
AK202422
BeezBustYourKneez
goodbye_fourth_wall
sombodyfailed101
-BelleEmery-
Kim_dokja_51
Candy_cadet9
daffleye
SoloArtblog
Kora_Afton

kttykang
Manifister
Esthefania_463
ToastiezHere
MixedBerry15
idowarcrimes
Ex_Lax
Storyteller323
Te_de_manzanilla_
rnnx29
Papi_FBI
AIYAYOUSTUPID
RulerofBirbs
femur_lemur
Obcy10
Madi_Bunz
LIMLBBMY
snowlemar

And all others who have been lost to my notifications.

To my commenters:

GlissBunBun666 Every comment you post and continue to write on my chapters has always, and I mean always, brought a smile to my face. God, I think my friends are sick of me mentioning you whenever I see you've commented.
VocalinaSalina
AK202422
sombodyfailed101
daffleye
ROS3_PINKY
nonexistingperson12
Rose_Kitten_2
ToastiezHere
MixedBerry15
idowarcrimes
goodbye_fourth_wall
Kora_Afton
Dari-Daro

AIYAYOUSTUPID
littlesweetcake06
Khloe7963941
Female_America
Nerfix112
CrystalsBirds
Storyteller323
Stars4eyes5

And to you, my dear readers. Who have built this story from the bottom up, and who I appreciate deeply.

Thank you all.

Thank you, so so so much.

God, I'm getting teary eyed. I can't believe this is goodbye.

I'll still be active, don't worry. But I think I'll start during late September for the next book.

I love you all.

You've really given me an experience no one else could give.

Thus, this story ends at 21:30, Thursday the 15th of August.

And, for the last time,

Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag.

-JakkalsTrou

Update about the second book

[image]

Right, so hello again everyone! This is just an update to let you know about the second book. Option B won, and I will directly be continuing this story. I hope to debut it on the 15th of September, so look out for the notification!

I've decided to name this series, and am now calling it the Hidden In Our Hearts installments.

Also, you'll never guess what happened!! So, I uploaded my story on ao3, AND NICETWIN123 LEGITIMATELY COMMENTED. Oh my god it was a dream come true, they saw my bookmark and decided to see my story that was inspired by theirs!!

They left such a heartfelt message on the last chapter, and I've never felt so smug, proud and insanely grateful as I did when reading it.

PLEASE go check them out, they are seriously the best.

I'm not sure whether to delete this chapter, as just an update for the second book later on in life. Oh well.

Anyways, Goeiemorê, middag, aand of nag!

It's out!

[image]
[image]

Yep, it's here. The first chapter of the second book is out!

So, if you enjoyed this book, I hope you enjoy the next!